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1967-68

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PROCEEDINGS

of the

CONFERENCE

on

ALASKAN HISTORY

Sponsored by the

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ALASKA METHODIST UNIVERSITY
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

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AMU CAMPUS JUNE 8-10, 1967

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Plate 71. Mask. Spirit of a Dead Man. Tlingit. Reprinted from Native Arts of the Pacific Northwest, from the Rasmussen Collection of the Portland Art Museum. Introductory text by Robert Tyler Davis, with the permission of the publishers, Stanford University Press. Copyright 1949 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University.

Back Cover

Plate 48. The good shaman of paired good-and-bad shaman masks used in a King Island dance. Reprinted from Eskimo Masks: Art and Ceremony. Text by Dorothy Jean Ray, photographs by Alfred A. Blaker, with the permission of the publisher, the University of Washington Press. Copyright 1967 by the University of Washington Press.

FRONTIER ALASKA

A STUDY IN HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION AND OPPORTUNITY

ALASKA METHODIST UNIVERSITY PRESS
1968

The first law of history is not to dare to tell a lie; the second is not to fear to tell the truth; besides, let the historian be beyond all suspicion of favoring or hating anyone whomsoever.

— Pope Leo XIII
Upon opening the Vatican Archives
to scholars of the World
August 18, 1883

Many of the views which have been advanced are highly speculative, and some no doubt will prove erroneous; but I have in every case given the reasons which have led me to one view rather than to another. It seemed worth while to try how far the principle of evolution would throw light on some of the more complex problems in the natural history of man. False facts are highly injurious to the progress of science, for they often endure long; but false views, if supported by some evidence, do little harm, for every one takes a salutary pleasure in proving their falseness: and when this is done, one path toward error is closed and the road to truth is often at the same time opened.

— Charles Darwin
General Summary and Conclusion
The Descent of Man 1871

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THE CONFERENCE ON ALASKAN HISTORY

In the spring of 1966, Morgan Sherwood suggested that Alaska might celebrate its Purchase Centennial most appropriately with a conference on Alaskan history. An Alaskan by birth, Sherwood spent his youth in the Great Land. Later he attended the University of California at Berkeley where he completed his Ph.D. in history. From Berkeley he went to the University of Cincinnati's department of history and is now with the University of California at Davis. Two books plus numerous articles on Alaskan history attest his conviction that the region is long overdue for serious research and writing.

The idea of a conference appealed to everyone. From Boulder, Colorado, where I was on sabbatical leave, I wrote Orcutt W. Frost, Jr., Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (AMU) and editor of the *Alaska Review,* forwarding Sherwood's proposal with suggestions. The plan quickly won support of AMU's President Frederick P. McGinnis, and in the following months ideas were exchanged between Anchorage, Alaska; Davis, California; and Boulder, Colorado. In July, 1966, the proposal for funding was submitted to Robert H. Walker, Director of the Division of Educational and Special Projects, National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, D.C. At the same time the project was discussed with Robert L. Zangrando, Director of the Service Center for Teachers of History and Assistant Executive Secretary of the American Historical Association. The proposal received the endorsement and active support of Senator E. L. (Bob) Bartlett and Senator Ernest Gruening. With the first month of the Purchase Centennial came approval and financial participation by the National Foundation and the American Historical Association.

Conference objectives were clearly challenging: to evaluate Alaskan historical scholarship; to clarify the status of Alaskan history for public school teachers and encourage closer attention to historical scholarship by social studies instructors in general; to indicate opportunities for research, study, and publication; to stimulate, in Alaska, an interest in Alaskan history by introducing principal historians to Alaskans and invited public officials; to encourage additional research

and writing in Alaskan history nationally, through publication of the proceedings of the conference; to acquaint students of Alaskan history with at least a part of the State's natural and cultural environment; and to acquaint historians of Alaska with each other. If met, the results would be a living memorial to the Purchase Centennial.

Through his acquaintence with anthropologists, economists, and historians of Alaska and the American West, Sherwood brought together on the Alaska Methodist University campus a distinguished group of specialists: Jeannette Paddock Nichols (University of Pennsylvania), Don E. Dumond (University of Oregon), Donald R. Ellegood (University of Washington), Ernest Gruening (United States Senate), Ted C. Hinckley (San Jose State College), Rodman W. Paul (California Institute of Technology), Richard A. Pierce (Queen's University), George W. Rogers (University of Alaska) Stuart Ramsay Tompkins (University of Oklahoma, emeritus), James W. VanStone (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago), and William H. Wilson (University of Alaska now North Texas State University).

The grant from the National Foundation allowed forty stipends for teacher participants. Chester E. Youngblood and William H. Wilson of the University of Alaska served on the Selection Committee with Chester C. Frisbie and M. David Yamamoto of Alaska Methodist University. Teacher participants with stipends were resident teachers in Alaskan schools who planned to remain in the state for the 1967-68 school year and whose assignment treated some area of history or related responsibility.

The Conference convened on the evening of June 8, 1967, with a banquet in the AMU Student Center. The banquet address was delivered by Senator Ernest Gruening who with his brilliant political career has been a pioneer in the writing of Alaska history. The two days following, June 9 and 10, papers were read before the Conference which was open to the public. With the exception of Senator Gruening's address all of the papers are printed here.

Although for a time these proceedings will keep the insights of Alaskan specialists before us, members of the Conference and especially its director will not forget the debt they owe AMU students and staff members who made all welcome, comfortable, and cared for the "mechanics" which such a venture necessitates. Special gratitude is expressed to Harold E. Springer, (Business Manager), Betty Connolly (Social Director), Patricia James (Food Services), Gordon Whittier (Buildings and Grounds), Gretchen Suber (Director of Residence), Kathryn Springer (Bookstore), Detta Stark (Switchboard), Crandall Randall (Audio Visual Services), Fred Miner (Student Assistant), and Susan Dickerson

(Typist). Fran Papp and Georgette Armstrong of the Business Office supervised mailing, registration, and information services prior to and during the conference. My AMU colleague, Saradell Ard, proved a gracious hostess at a reception given in her apartment for the visiting scholars. Laurel Bland rendered the transcription from the tapes of the sessions. Without the cheerful and efficient work of each of the above — and unnamed others — the Conference would not have been a success.

It is my belief that the objectives of the Conference were addressed and largely achieved. For the communication of participants did contribute to a clearer understanding of the status of Alaskan history by reviewing the research and writing in the topics on Alaskan studies which they treated; in suggesting reinterpretations and misconceptions where encountered; and advocating new directions in research and writing which will prove helpful in sharpening Alaska's understanding of its past and its future.

Robert A. Frederick
Director

Conference members gather for the Banquet

In the foreground, left to right, Donald Ellegood (back to camera) — Stuart Tompkins — Frank Busbe — Paul McCarthy.

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Alaska Methodist University wishes to express its gratitude to Dr. Robert H. Walker, Director, Division of Education and Public Programs and the *National Endowment for the Humanities* for the encouragement and generous financial support of this first Conference on Alaskan history. The excellent work of the Endowment is only possible with leadership which matches goals and opportunities. The following thoughts of Dr. Barnaby C. Keeney, Chairman of the *National Endowment,* are reprinted in deep appreciation for his vision and that of his colleagues of the *National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities.*

— — —

"A striking point of the last decade of American life has been the growing frustration in public life as realization developed that our wealth, our superb technical and material skills, our undifferentiated desire for the superlative across the gamut of our national existence, created as many, perhaps more, problems than they solved. As though to mock our material progress, darkening problems of urbanization, of lacerating political and social division, and of aimless discontent grow with our progress. It is perhaps not too much of an exaggeration to say that the country is passing through a crisis of confidence in its achievements and its aspirations—indeed; itself.

It is in response to this climate that the *Endowment* faces its most challenging opportunity—to increase the interest in and use of the humanities by our citizens, and to improve their access to them. Other things can make us wealthy and powerful; the humanities are to make us wise, and they lead us to apply our wisdom in ways which can heal both private and public life. It is urgently in the national interest to make available to the broad public as well as the scholarly community the attitudes of mind, the methods of assessing value, the self-knowledge and civic knowledge which are the ultimate contributions of the humanities to public and private life. If a broad public can be encouraged to appreciate and understand the humanities, they may habitually use this knowledge in making their public and private de-

cisions. It is impossible to calculate the beneficial national effect of 'being scientific,' but few would question that such an outlook has been of fundamental importance in achieving our present material good fortune at home and our leadership abroad. We are persuaded that 'being humanistic,' both in our schools and colleges and outside them, is equally necessary for solutions to our national anguishes, to maintain our leadership abroad, and to represent to the world what the quality of human life can be. No less than this is the ultimate objective of the *Endowment*, and we believe that it was as an expression of such hopes and convictions that the President and Congress established the Endowment. The need, as the President put it is 'not only in enriching scholarship but enriching life for all people.'

The *Endowment* intends to develop programs aimed at improving qualitatively the teaching of humanities in the schools, and aimed at achieving the same effect on those instruments of the humanities useful in reaching the general public – television, films, the newspapers, the museums and historical societies. Support of basic research in the humanities is the keystone around which such efforts must be built in order to achieve a lasting effect. It serves no purpose to instill a high school student with a driving interest in history, then send him into a college where his history professor has not been able to sustain his own interests. It serves no purpose to create public interest in the humanities, if those who must serve that interest are so poorly trained that they quench what great effort has ignited.

In the next several years, one may hope that new approaches to teaching and research at all levels of the humanities will create the possibility of a genuine break-through. It is also entirely likely that increasing numbers of students, competition for funds, and the absence of a focused national effort to up-grade the humanities will cause such an opportunity to be missed. The *Endowment* expects to encourage as many promising avenues of qualitative improvement at all levels and in all fields as its funds permit. It hopes to serve such as a leaven to draw attention to the needs and the satisfactions of the humanities. But it is well aware that the break-throughs must come in the final analysis from the scholars and citizens who labor to understand what the humanities can teach."

– Barnaby C. Keeney, Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities
Washington, D.C.

National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities
1800 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

THE SERVICE CENTER FOR TEACHERS OF HISTORY

The Conference on Alaskan History was selected by Dr. Robert L. Zangrando, Director of the American Historical Association's *Service Center for Teachers of History* as worthy of sponsorship. Alaska Methodist University wishes to thank Dr. Zangrando and the Committee on Teaching of the American Historical Association for their interest and financial support.

The American Historical Association has long been interested in the teaching of history in the United States. Committees of the Association have published more than twenty volumes of reports concerning the organization and content of history courses and the value of history in American education. But the growing complexity of the world in which we live and the increasing specialization of historical research constantly produces new topics and areas of interest that must be treated, and many interpretations must be revised. Therefore, because of its continuing interest in the teaching of history in the schools, in 1956 the American Historical Association established the *Service Center for Teachers of History* in an effort to offer constructive assistance in solving some of the problems facing the classroom teacher. Teachers of history are frequently responsible for courses in other social studies, and teachers of social studies with major training in other disciplines are often assigned to history courses. It is difficult for busy teachers to keep abreast of the flood of new materials published by experts in various fields. The *Service Center* helps to provide scholarly leadership in meeting these problems.

HISTORICAL PAMPHLETS

One of the programs sponsored by the *Service Center* is the preparation of a series of pamphlets (now over 65 in number) on selected historical topics appropriate to the history courses most widely offered in schools. Since many secondary-school teachers have neither the time nor the opportunity to read widely in the monographic literature, these pamphlets seeks to bring the reader in touch with current interpretations

and significant writings in a particular field of historical study. By helping teachers keep up to date in their fields of interest, the pamphlets can materially benefit the teacher and thereby contribute to the enrichment of classroom instruction.

CONFERENCES FOR HISTORY TEACHERS

To promote the general objective of maintaining and improving standards of history teaching, the *Service Center* also sponsors conferences for history teachers. These meetings, held in conjunction with the department of history at a college or university or with a state or regional council for the social studies, are designed to serve high school teachers within a convenient radius. There are some two-dozen *Service Center* meetings throughout the country each year. Their primary purpose is to provide teachers with an opportunity to hear specialists discuss the latest research and writings in their fields and present current, scholarly historical interpretations on selected topics. The sessions are organized to do in person much the sort of thing that is done in the pamphlet series. The conferences have the added benefit of bringing college and research historians directly in touch with the problems and potentials of the school history teacher. Members of the history department at the host institution collaborate with visiting specialists to lead the program sessions. Outside speakers can contribute added interest and broader scope, while the members of the local department or social studies council can provide essential continuity and liaison for ongoing work among colleges and secondary-school teachers.

The *Service Center for Teachers of History* is sponsored by the Committee on Teaching of the American Historical Association.

Historical pamphlets and subscriptions to the American Historical Review may be obtained by writing the Service Center for Teachers of History, 400 A Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

CONFERENCE ROSTER

Editor's Note: The names listed below in categories of participants are those who officially registered during the Conference. Many others attended the banquet and sessions but failed to register.

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Thomas M. Acree
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Anchorage

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* Though selected, these teachers could not attend.

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KEYNOTE: AN HISTORIAN-OF-ACTION

ERNEST GRUENING, United States Senator, Alaska, opened the Conference on Alaskan History with an address touching events which culminated with the entrance of the 49th State into the American Union. The Battle For Alaska Statehood (1967) and his An Alaskan Reader (1967) celebrate the Purchase Centennial of the land he served as Territorial Governor for fourteen years. His brilliant career has encompassed medicine, journalism, diplomacy, government administration, legislation in domestic and foreign policy, and the acting and writing of history. Having entered the world of news and ideas as editor of the New York Evening Post and The Nation, his years in the public service have produced significant chronicles: The State of Alaska (1954), These United States, Mexico and Its Heritage (1928), and The Public Pays (1931). Few who have known Ernest Gruening could deny that his life reflects Thomas Jefferson's democracy and Winston Churchill's ability.

PROLOGUE

MORGAN B. SHERWOOD, Program Chairman for the Conference on Alaskan History, received his doctorate in history from the University of California at Berkeley. He has taught at the University of Cincinnati, and is now with the University of California at Davis. He is author of Exploration of Alaska (1965) and editor of Alaska and Its History (1967). His articles have appeared in the Pacific Historical Review, Journal of the West, Agricultural History, and Pacific Northwest Quarterly. A specialist in the history of American science, he is associate editor of the University of California's journal of Agricultural History and co-editor with J. L. Penick, Jr., C. W. Pursell, Jr., and D. C. Swain of The Politics of American Science: 1939 To The Present (1965). His article, "Science in Russian America 1741 to 1865" appeared in the Pacific Northwest Quarterly, January, 1967.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ALASKA'S PAST

MORGAN B. SHERWOOD

Nobody here would deny the necessity of studying Alaskan history. The significance of Alaska's past should be obvious, but the obvious, too often, is never stated. Perhaps one paragraph from the proposal for this Conference can stand repetition:

"Alaska's history has regional, national, international and interdisciplinary dimensions. An understanding of Alaska's prehistory is crucial to an understanding of the origin of all the native peoples of the continent. Alaska was the limit of Russian eastward expansion and Alaska's past is therefore closely related to Russian and Far Eastern history. Russian America had a role in the history of the whole Pacific Ocean area. Alaska was the westward continental limit of United States territorial expansion, and therefore deserves the attention of historians of the American westward movement. Both Russian Alaskan and American Alaskan history merge with the history of Canada. Alaska's purchase, its boundaries and fisheries have played an important part in the diplomatic history of the United States. As the first non-contiguous territory of the United States, Alaska's past is an area for the study of American colonial practices. Alaska's large area, ample resources but small population pose a problem for students of economic history. A part of the country's past is a notable chapter in the history of science.[1] And Alaska itself is a living laboratory for study of the Turner thesis."

Given these broad areas of investigation, the Conference seeks, through a meeting of professional historians, high school teachers, and Alaskans, to determine what has been done and what needs to be done in Alaskan historical scholarship.

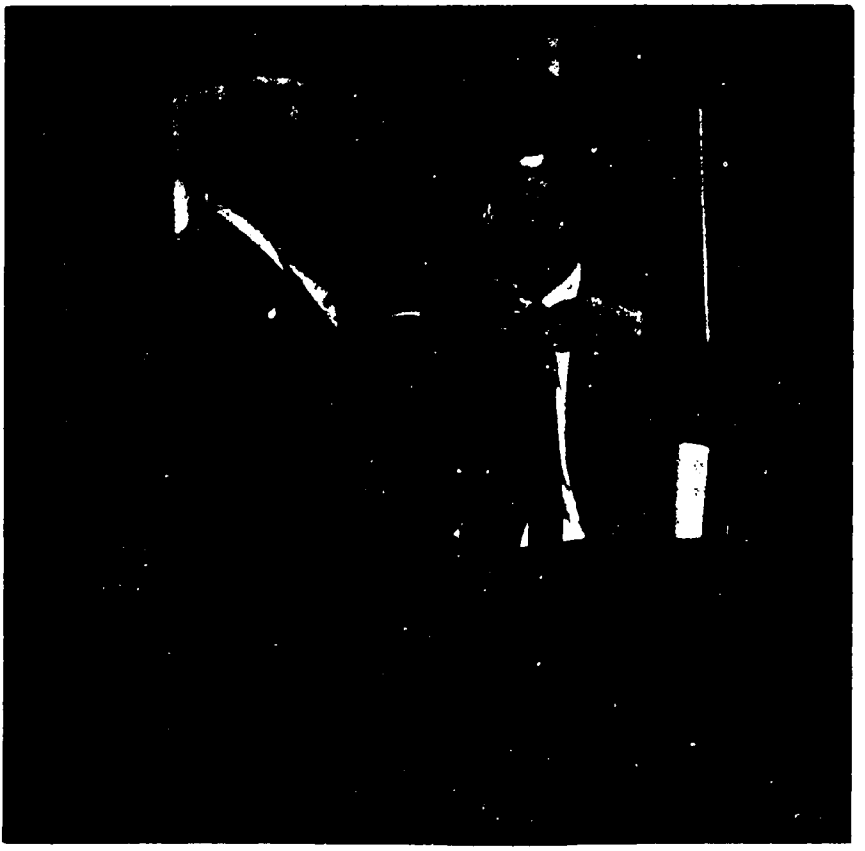
Alaska is still young country, 235 years after its discovery by Europeans. Its future is still unmapped, in part because its past has

Dr. Morgan B. Sherwood is associate professor of history at the University of California, Davis.

been neglected. My own views about the quality of existing historical writing are in print; if anything, I was too general and too polite.[2] The literature is strewn with nonhistories, irresponsible duplications, "how-to" books, and just plain sloppy and superficial research. This Conference can lead the way to correcting that distressing situation. The scholars on your program will evaluate existing research, survey the state of our knowledge, and identify topics which need investigation. Their own books and articles are examples of what can be done and what must be done if we are to have any clear understanding of Alaska's present condition and its future possibilities.

1 On this last point, see the remarks of Alan T. Waterman, then Director of the National Science Foundation, at the Thirteenth Annual Alaska Science Conference, Juneau Daily Empire, August 24, 1962.

2 Alaska And Its History (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967) xiii-xx.



Stuart Ramsey Tompkins and Morgan B. Sherwood

THE QUEST FOR ALASKAN HISTORY

DONALD R. ELLEGOOD

Editor's Note: These comments are the closing portion of Mr. Ellegood's informal talk before the Conference on the topic "The Publication of Alaskan History and Anthropology." They are reprinted here because Mr. Ellegood notes the characteristics of unpublishable manuscripts, calls for a meaningful dialogue between historians and university presses, and suggests categories of publishable history. He is now Director of the University of Washington Press.

The University of Washington Press would publish many more books on Alaska if we could find publishable manuscripts. A number have been submitted to the Press in the past few years, but after careful evaluation we found that most of them suffer from the faults that we find in history writing generally and which Ray Allen Billington found specifically in western history. Too many of the manuscripts submitted to us are *provincial* – concerned only with local events and lacking in greater significance. Other works suffer essentially from being antiquarian in which the author is concerned with tracking down the origin of ultimately *meaningless* or trivial detail. The third category of unpublishable manuscripts that have come our way is the extremely popular work in which *bad writing* is a notable characteristic and the least modest action is blown *out of proportion.*

This experience has yielded a sense of the possible. I hope that the first Conference on Alaskan History will develop a dialogue between you who are interested in Alaskan history and we who are interested in publishing Alaskan history, enabling us to identify those subjects which deserve book-length scholarly publication. It is easy enough to point to broad areas, and this I will do. It is up to you, however, the

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DONALD R. ELLEGOOD is the Director of the University of Washington Press. His informal talk "The Publication of Alaskan History and Anthropology" opened the first full conference day. The presentation surrounded recent publications on Alaskan history which the University of Washington Press has developed: Morgan Sherwood's Alaska and Its History; Murray Morgan, One Man's Gold Rush: A Klondike Album (written around the photographs of E. A. Hegg) and the American Heritage excerpts (August, 1967); Dorothy Jean Ray's, Eskimo Masks, Art and Ceremony (photographs by Alfred A. Blaker). The University of Washington Press has joined the University of Alaska in publishing its Centennial Monograph Series. Mr. Ellegood's closing remarks are here printed.

experts in the field, to point to us specific areas, specific subjects that are suitable for book-length treatment. An obvious need in your field is for an up-to-date bibliography. The only available bibliography [Wickersham] is down to 1924. I have heard tales of work done by Melvin Ricks and while I am here I hope to track down this manuscript and learn more about it. Another large area in which work remains is in translation of the basic documents in the Russian and possibly from the Spanish. The Press has commissioned a translation which is nearing completion of Tikhmenev's *Historical Review of the Russian-American Company*. Richard Pierce tells me that the translation is nearing completion. We look forward to putting into print, in English, this basic document in the very near future. I am equally certain there are many other deserving documents which must be translated into English before they enter the mainstream of English scholarship. I am quite certain these works are essential to an understanding of the development of Alaskan History. Indeed, they may contain very significant clues to the character of this great state.

Without question many, many more biographies need to be written of leading and possibly secondary personages of Alaska. I suspect, reasoning by analogy with Southern history (a field with which I am better acquainted), that there are a number of unwritten heros of Alaskan history deserving of reconstruction. We are on the lookout for these works.

Last evening Senator Gruening outlined a whole spectrum of general history of Alaska which needed to be written — economic, social, political, and to this, I would add, there is the greatest possible need for a viable textbook for use in Alaskan history, possibly at the secondary school level. The first-rate textbook can't be written, of course, until the other research has been done, but my understanding is that the textbooks presently in use are very badly outdated, so that even an interim textbook would fulfill a useful need for many years to come.

I also suspect there are many deserving books which have fallen into the "out-of-print" category which might well be reprinted to benefit the whole field. Drawing on our own backlist and on the publications of the American Ethnological Society, the University of Washington Press has already done some of this. But we would like to expand this to include reprints of books by other publishers to which should be added a new introduction, pointing up its major contributions, and most serious shortcomings — which annotates, corrects, comments, elucidates the text itself. We would like to reprint basic documents with full scholarly annotation to give maximum utility to the profession.

Another area in which much work needs to be done is the field of editing certain documents. These can be diaries. These can be collections of photographs, or collections of drawings. At Fairbanks, Paul McCarthy, University Archivist showed me an absolutely fascinating collection of drawings by an Eskimo girl named Florence Nupak who, under the inspiration of Otto Giest, made a series of detailed drawings of life on St. Lawrence Island in 1928 and 1929. The drawings have esthetic value, of course, but also great anthropological value in the detail that they show in the way of life there.

I am sure that Alaska is abundant in its documentary resources in attics, or caches, or locked away in old chests.

In any and all of these fields, much work needs be done. Our meeting will be a resounding success IF this Conference on Alaskan History, like the Western history inaugural meeting five years ago can focus your interests, stimulate your activity, and lead to a start in filling these many gaps. I would conclude by stressing again the very strong interest of the University of Washington Press in working with you in publishing these materials. The books I discussed are almost accidental, but in things Alaskan our concerns are long range. I assure you that our interest will extend far beyond this Centennial Year.

WORKING THE SMALLER CLAIM

SCHOLARLY AND POPULAR JOURNALS

George Washington, writing to Mathew Carey, June 25, 1788, captured the significance of one medium of communication when he penned these words.

> For myself, I entertain a high idea of the utility of the periodical Publications . . . I consider such easy vehicles of knowledge, more happily calculated than any other, to preserve the liberty, stimulate the industry and meliorate the morals of an enlightened and free People. [1]

The teacher and writer of history will find these scholarly and popular journals a source of material on Alaska, the Arctic, the American and Canadian West, and the Pacific Basin. They also afford the careful author an opportunity to publish worthwhile manuscripts. Often a subject is not of book-length although it is desirable that important research is published frequently enough to be helpful to others working in the same or related fields. The scholarly or popular journal provides this service. Many of these journals were displayed at the Conference.

ALASKA MONTHLY REVIEW OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
Institute of Social, Economic, and Government Research
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

ALASKA NORTHERN LIGHTS QUARTERLY
Alaska Northern Lights Press
Post Office Box 4BB
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

ALASKA REVIEW
Alaska Methodist University
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

ALASKA SPORTSMAN
Alaska Northwest Publishing Company
Juneau, Alaska 99801

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST
American Anthropological Association
1530 P Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

AMERICAN ANTIQUITY
Society for American Archaeology
1530 P. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

AMERICAN ECONOMIC REVIEW
American Economic Association
Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois 60201

AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW
American Historical Association
400 A Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

AMERICAN WEST
Western History Association
577 College Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
Department of Anthropology and
Geography
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

ARCTIC
Arctic Institute of North America
3458 Redpath Street
Montreal 25, Canada

ARCTIC ANTHROPOLOGY
Department of Anthropology
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

BEAVER: MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH
The Hudson's Bay Company
Hudson's Bay House
Winnipeg 1, Canada

CANADIAN HISTORICAL REVIEW
Canadian Historical Association
University of Toronto Press
Toronto 5, Canada

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
University of Toronto Press
Toronto 5, Canada

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS
AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
Canadian Political Science Association
University of Toronto Press
Toronto 5, Canada

JOURNAL OF AMERICAN HISTORY
Ballantine Hall, Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

JOURNAL OF THE WEST
1915 South Western Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90018

PACIFIC HISTORICAL REVIEW
University of California Press
Berkeley, California 94720

PACIFIC NORTHWEST QUARTERLY
Parrington Hall
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98105

PROCEEDINGS OF
ALASKAN SCIENCE CONFERENCES
Alaska Division, American Association
for the Advancement of Science
Executive Secretary
University of Alaska
College, Alaska 99701

FEDERAL FIELD COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN ALASKA
(A PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE)
632 W. Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Though this Presidential Committee does not issue a journal, it does have available to the public economic analyses and reports on different sections of the Alaskan economy and socio-economic analyses on the circumstance of the Alaskan native.

1 Quoted in the frontispiece of Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory 1965-66, Volume 2 (Arts, Humanities, Business, & Social Sciences) edited by Eileen C. Graves and published by R. R. Bowker (New York, 1966).

PREHISTORY AND ETHNOLOGY OF ALASKA

And then, no man knows why,
There came the savages, smiling, bring corn.
Corngivers, why do you give
That these men live?
They think that you are devils of the wood
And you have fought them once and will again,
Yet, in their last extremity, you come
As if in answer to some forest drum
To bring the bounty never understood,
To bring the food that saves the starving men.

Gods? You have seen them die like truculent fools
Where any one of you would live and thrive
And, if they have the iron and the tools,
The powder and the shot,
These things avail them not.
Their magic cannot keep their best alive.

Pity? Why should you pity them or care?
They will be greedy, soon, when they are fed.
Look in their eyes and see
The felling of the tree . . . .
Look in their eyes and see the hungry man
Moving with axe and fire upon the wood,
Spoiling the rivers, digging up the dead.
This is your own destruction that you bear
In venison and corn
And the red Autumn leaf
That falls before the snow . . . .

And yet, before it happens, and the great
Passionate drum of wrong begins to sound,
Ere the dead lie upon the bloody ground
And the chief's sons lie drunken in the street,
Let us remember how this happened, too,
And how food was given, not in hate,
Liking or dazzled wonder, but, it seems,
As if compelled by something past all plans,
Some old, barbaric courtesy of man's,
Wild as his heart, red as his hunter's dreams,
—And for no cause the white men ever knew.

—Stephen Vincent Benet
Western Star

TOWARD A PREHISTORY OF ALASKA

D. E. DUMOND

The purpose of this paper is to assess in a general way the progress made thus far in the development of an Alaskan prehistory. The word *development* is used intentionally in this context, for as with history itself, the formulation of prehistory is a process of creation, of interpretation. Like history, prehistory is an organization of facts. But the *pre* in prehistory means that these facts are not historic, that is, not documentary. Central, but not alone, are archaeological facts, and prehistorians are commonly archaeologists. Thus as history is something inflicted by historians upon documents, so prehistory is imposed by prehistorians upon stones and bones.

The immediate problem which confronts the prehistorian when he approaches aboriginal Alaska is simply this: There are two kinds of people commonly recognized here, the Eskimos together with their cousins the Aleuts on one hand, and the Indians on the other. What, we may ask, makes these people different from one another? When did they come? Where did they come from? Why are they where they are? These are simple and obvious questions. The answers, as any historian would suspect, are neither simple nor obvious.

More particularly, then, the intent of this paper is to provide an indication of the extent to which these questions can at present be answered. But in order to do this, it will be necessary first to mention the kinds of facts which may be used in arriving at a statement of prehistory.

THE RAW MATERIALS OF PREHISTORY

I have mentioned archaeology, and to many people this appears to be synonymous with prehistory. Archaeology, of course, involves the study of ancient things which people have made or used. These things include both portable objects such as harpoons and toothpicks, and

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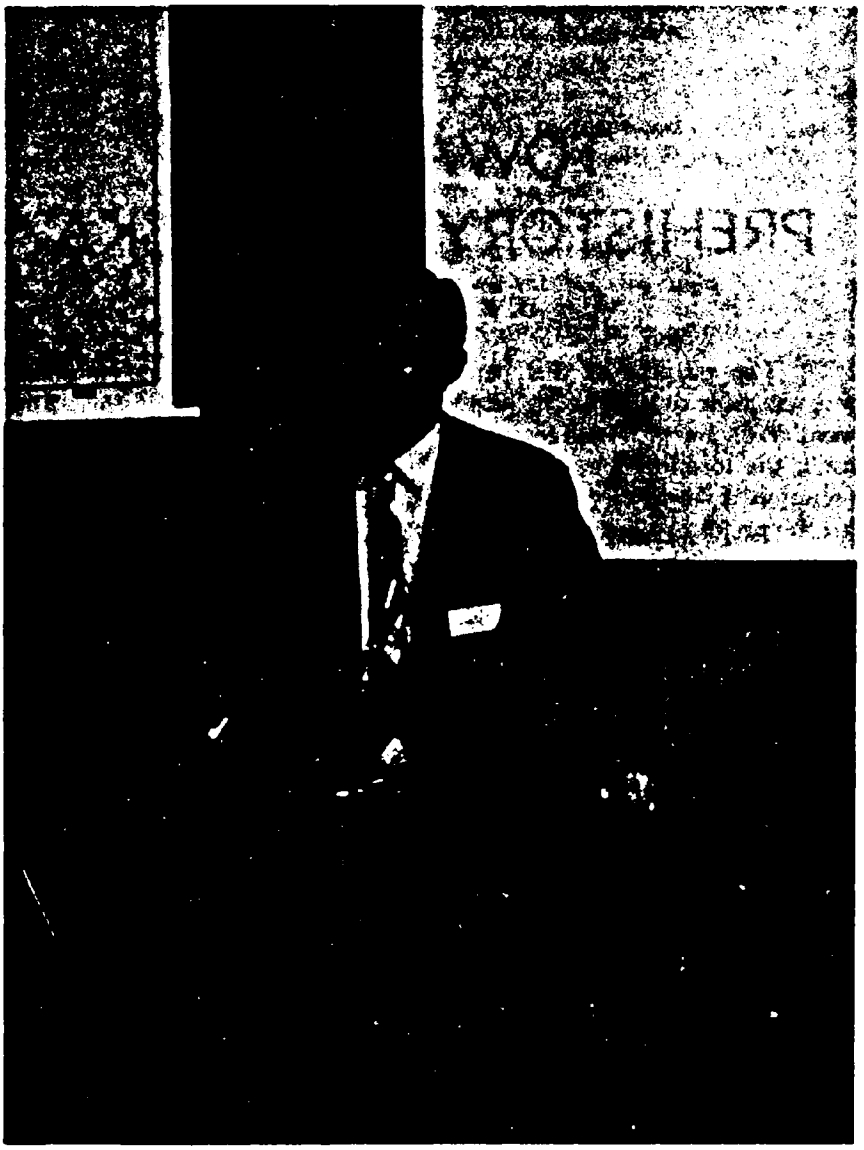

DON E. DUMOND is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oregon. Author of articles in the New Mexico Quarterly, Arctic Anthropology, American Antiquity, and the American Anthropologist, among other places, he is completing a monograph on the archaeological anthropology of the Naknek River and Lake region, and has begun research into the prehistory of Nunivak Island. His publications have ranged widely in American anthropology including Swiddden agriculture and the rise of the Maya civilization; the John Day Reservoir area of the middle Columbia River; southwestern Alaska; and Eskaleutian linguistics, archaeology, and prehistory.

non-portable objects such as houses and hearths and graves; all these things are aids to the achievement of what any given people conceives to be a proper life. They are, that is, *tools* in the broadest possible sense.

Because people learn to make these tools from their parents and companions, it is obvious that people who have been reared together will tend to make the same kind of tools. And what the archaeologist does is to make collections of tools from different places and points in time and compare them. This is especially a process of comparing the entire assemblage of tools of one society, with the entire assemblage of tools of another society. For this reason, knowledge of the exact source of implements is of utmost importance; loose museum specimens, while interesting and frequently useful in a subsidiary way, are of secondary utility.

But archaeology is not the only device of the prehistorian. In saying that aboriginal Alaska was made up of two kinds of people, I was already using another most important device. For just as these two kinds of people are distinct socially and culturally, they fall into two broad linguistic divisions: the Eskaleutian family on the one hand, which includes the Eskimo and Aleut languages; and the Nadene phylum of languages on the other hand, which includes the speech of all the Indians of Alaska — Athapaskan, Eyak, and Tlingit (Figure 1).

The usual thing is for one to learn to speak his native language as he learns to make his tools — from his family and friends. Therefore, in saying that these aboriginal peoples are two, I have in fact said that I believe the speakers of Nadene to have had a common ancestor, and that I believe the Eskimo-Aleut to have had another common ancestor. That judgment is of obvious prehistoric importance. Furthermore, not all Eskimos live in Alaska — they are spread from the easternmost tip of Siberia to the east side of Greenland, covering the northern coast of Canada. And not all Nadene speakers live in Alaska — the Haida are in British Columbia, and the Athapaskan family includes peoples in a solid block extending east almost to Hudson's Bay and south to interior British Columbia, with other scattered relatives in Oregon, California, and the American Southwest. Surely these facts too are of importance to the prehistorian, with their indication that aboriginal Alaska was not a self-contained ethnic unit.

A third major device of the prehistorian involves the assessment and comparison of physical characteristics, either those of living peoples or of surviving bones of dead ones. By this means, account is taken of the degree to which different populations hold genes in common. And as it is most usual for any person to obtain his genes from the same people from whom he learns to speak his language and make his tools,

the results of this approach should tend to parallel those of the other two. In Alaska, this device has served to support that division of Eskimo-Aleuts and Indians into two groups (e.g., Laughlin 1962; Oschinsky 1964), and it also apparently supports the division between Eskimos and Aleuts, who are not so distinct from each other as from Indians, but who are nevertheless held to be recognizably individual (Laughlin 1962).

Although potentially of great use, there are some theoretical difficulties – not to be gone into here – hampering the extensive use of physical characteristics for constructing prehistory, and also an eminently practical one: human bones deteriorate rapidly and aboriginal populations were usually small, so that in the long run it is easier to amass a collection of tools than a collection of human skeletons. I shall therefore need to add only that at this time we do not really have enough data to go farther than I have already gone in deriving inferences from Alaskan aboriginal physical remains.

After these preliminary remarks, I shall turn specifically to a short discussion of some opinions which have been expressed regarding the origin of the Alaskan peoples themselves.

OPINION, THEORY, AND EXPLANATION

It is simpler to begin with past opinion regarding the Alaskan Indians, chiefly because they have received so much less direct attention from prehistorians than have the coastal Eskimo-Aleut. From their northerly position, they have been thought to represent one of the later arrivals to the New World, thought by some to be even later immigrants than the Eskimo-Aleuts (e.g., Birket-Smith 1930). They have been suggested to be related linguistically to Asian groups, specifically Altaic (e.g., Swadesh 1964) and Sino-Tibetan (Shafer 1952). Little more begs to be said.

The prehistory of the Eskimo-Aleuts has received the greater share of attention. First encountered in Greenland by the Vikings sometime in the eleventh or twelfth centuries, scientific study of these related peoples has flourished since the nineteenth century. Views on Eskimo-Aleut origins and development have been varied, concerning on the one hand the origin of the people themselves in a physical sense, and on the other hand the origin of their way of life, characterized by that remarkable adaptation to the northern coasts.

Physically, the Eskimo and Aleut populations are the most Mongoloid of the native American peoples. And because they and they alone are firmly positioned on the Alaskan coast where it most closely approaches Asia, these people must be among the most recent Asian

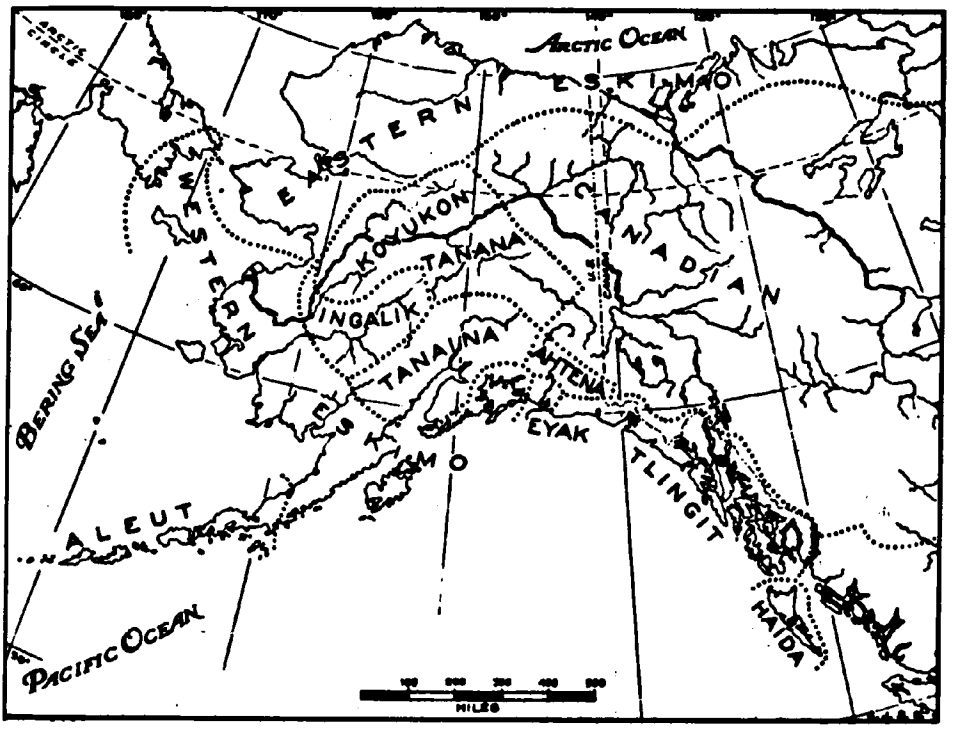

Fig. 1. — Distribution of speakers of native Alaskan languages. Linguistic designations are those of Figures 2 and 4.

immigrants. Doubtless it is for this reason that so many varied attempts have been made to relate their speech to so many Old World language groups — to Ural-Altaic, to Indo-European, or to Paleo-Siberian (e.g., Collins 1951: 425, with references; Swadesh 1962; Voegelin and Voegelin 1966). In short, there has been general agreement on the ultimate Asian origin of the people themselves.

By no means so general, however, has been agreement about the exact path by which these people or their ideas might have entered the New World. Some, including the missionary Veniaminov, have seen the Aleutian Islands as a bridge (e.g., Heizer 1943; de Laguna 1946:19). Others, including W. H. Dall (1877), have insisted that Bering Strait was the only entry. Still others argue that all significant entrance had been made before the final flooding of the Bering Platform, the land bridge which once joined Asia and Alaska (e.g., Laughlin 1963).

Even less general has been agreement on the place which the specific adaptations to the environment, so fundamental to the Eskimo-Aleut cultural identity, were developed. Briefly, these views may be said to have included locations in Alaska (e.g., Rink 1891, for an early view), in Canada (e.g., Birket-Smith 1959, for a recent statement), or in Asia (e.g., Larsen and Rainey 1946: 157-161). To complicate the matter further, argument has concerned not only the place at which this specific way of life was developed by ancestral peoples, but also the source of individual ideas which went into the makeup of this whole way of life. One particularly influential scholar, for instance, has argued that although the Eskimo way of life as a whole was developed around Bering Strait, the individual pieces of technique which composed it may be traced to Asia and indeed ultimately to the late Paleolithic of northern Europe (Collins 1951; 1959; 1960).

These differences of opinion are not necessarily based on completely different sets of facts. The stock of facts does change with each new piece of significant research, of course. But changes also occur in the preconceptions from which prehistory is imposed upon those facts. These preconceptions derive from the theoretical stand of the prehistorian, a stand which varies from individual to individual, from decade to decade, and from continent to continent. And now another set of elements must be brought into the discussion — the explanatory mechanisms which are used by the prehistorian to relate his facts one to another.

Prehistorians have frequently spoken of the "building of culture," tallying evidence for what they consider the passage of ideas. They thus reckon not people but ideas as manifest in tools, and speak of "culture drift" — a stream of ideas — without ever committing themselves to

enunciation of a precise means for its transmission. The "culture" which is the focus of attention in this view is "superorganic" in the sense that it may be considered without reference to its carriers. It is an entity in its own right, this view holds, which grows by accretion of miscellaneous ideas in a fashion almost haphazard, a thing of "shreds and patches" as one earlier anthropologist called it (Lowie 1920:441). As it may "drift" like snow, so its elements may "diffuse" like molecules of gas.

And of course it is easy to switch from speaking of a drift of culture to speaking of a drift of people. Why things in one place look like things in another place can be explained in terms of migrations. Certainly this mechanism has been used freely by interpreters who favored quite different heartlands of the Eskimo-Aleuts. Ideas are seen to spread as people migrate. In this way, for instance, the rather sudden appearance in late prehistoric Alaska of some implement forms common earlier in the Eskimo region of Canada was explained as the result of a late migration from the east (e.g., Collins 1937: 369-371). Yet we know that people do trade, after all, more often than they migrate. And they exchange ideas as they exchange goods.

The reliance on this migration device has been strong enough to give rise to its counter position. The countermovement was most evidenced by a man who until his recent untimely death was without doubt the single most productive archaeologist working in Alaska — James Louis Giddings. Insisting upon long-term continuity of population, he applied to the Bering Strait region what American prehistorians have referred to as the "area co-tradition" concept. In this view, three adjacent areas — Asia, the Bering Sea coast, and the Chukchi Sea coast — shared a common core of tradition, while each maintained almost complete stability of population as far back as the record of archaeology has gone, exchanging ideas but not population (Giddings 1960). "Diffusion" of ideas was the primary explanatory mechanism. Yet we know that people do change residence, *do* migrate, even though economy in explanation may lie in minimizing the reliance on migration.

It is high time now to mention another fact important in the understanding of the development of a prehistory of Alaska. And this is that prehistorians in the United States are predominantly anthropologists by training, as is also true of those European prehistorians who have concerned themselves with Alaska. Alaskan prehistory, then, is an anthropological variety of prehistory.

By repute, at least, historians are relatively free to consider themselves to be either social scientists or humanists, as they choose, free to consider the formulation of history either as science or as art. Anthropologists are not so free, because anthropology is science by

definition. That this may be as much the result of historical accident as of theoretical rigor is beside the point. What is important is the anthropologist's self-conscious employment of an assumption that explanatory relationships between facts must be systematic, must be susceptible to a measure of successful prediction — prediction not, to be sure, in the sense that prehistoric events would be expected to repeat themselves in the future, but in the sense that research results can be predicted beforehand.

Anthropological prehistory is approached, then, by means of inductive generalizations drawn from ethnographic evidence provided by living peoples, or from archaeological facts consisting of specific tools found in specific contexts. From these generalizations are deduced hypotheses regarding other specific areas of fact. These hypotheses are then tested by that most uncomfortable method, digging, or by that only slightly less uncomfortable method, a survey of relevant literature.

Clearly, the preconceptions regarding human behavior which the prehistorian must hold as a result of his anthropological training are of controlling importance in the systematization of his data — that is, in the formulation of his hypotheses and the construction of his prehistory. And as the body of anthropological thought changes through time — as all such bodies of theory change — so do his preconceptions.

It is fair to say that not long ago the dominant American anthropological view of culture was that it was a thing of "shreds and patches," and the prehistorians who held that view were simply aligning themselves according to the spirit of the times. Now, increasingly systematic explanatory models are stressed; anthropologists talk more and more in terms of "systems": Culture is a system, parts of culture are systems, society is a system, there is a socio-cultural system. It is little wonder that prehistorians are becoming less interested in tracing individual cultural traits, in "building culture," and more interested in isolating prehistoric social units and analysing social behavior, in pursuing systematic relationships between people and their physical surroundings, or between different groups of peoples (e.g., Binford 1962; Chang 1966; Deetz 1965; Hill 1966; Longacre 1966). So, of course, the focus has come to be less on "culture" as a superorganic entity, and more on societies as definable units. It is here that linguistic relationships are especially important, for if two groups of people once spoke a common language, then they must have formed a common social group.

With this out of the way, we can turn again to consideration of Alaskan prehistory, to the imposition of yet another set of preconceptions upon this portion of the world.

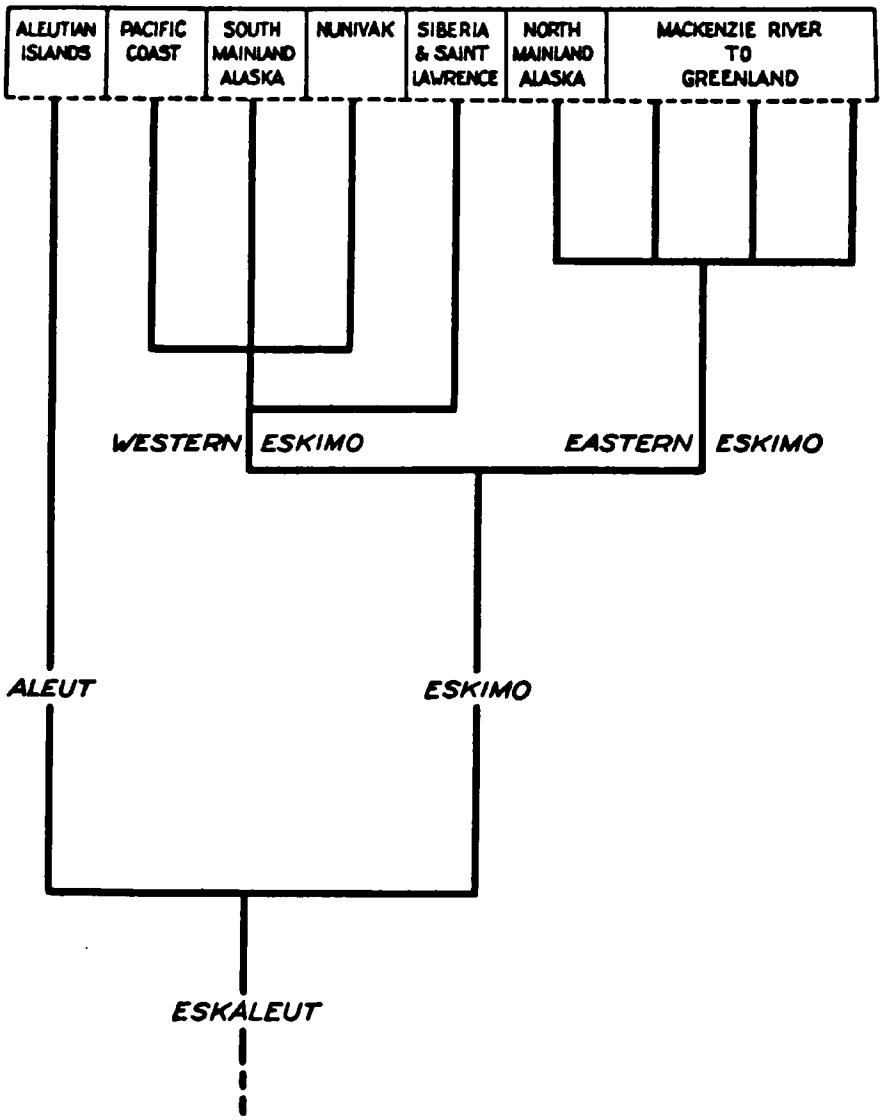

Fig. 2. — Family tree of Eskaleutian languages.

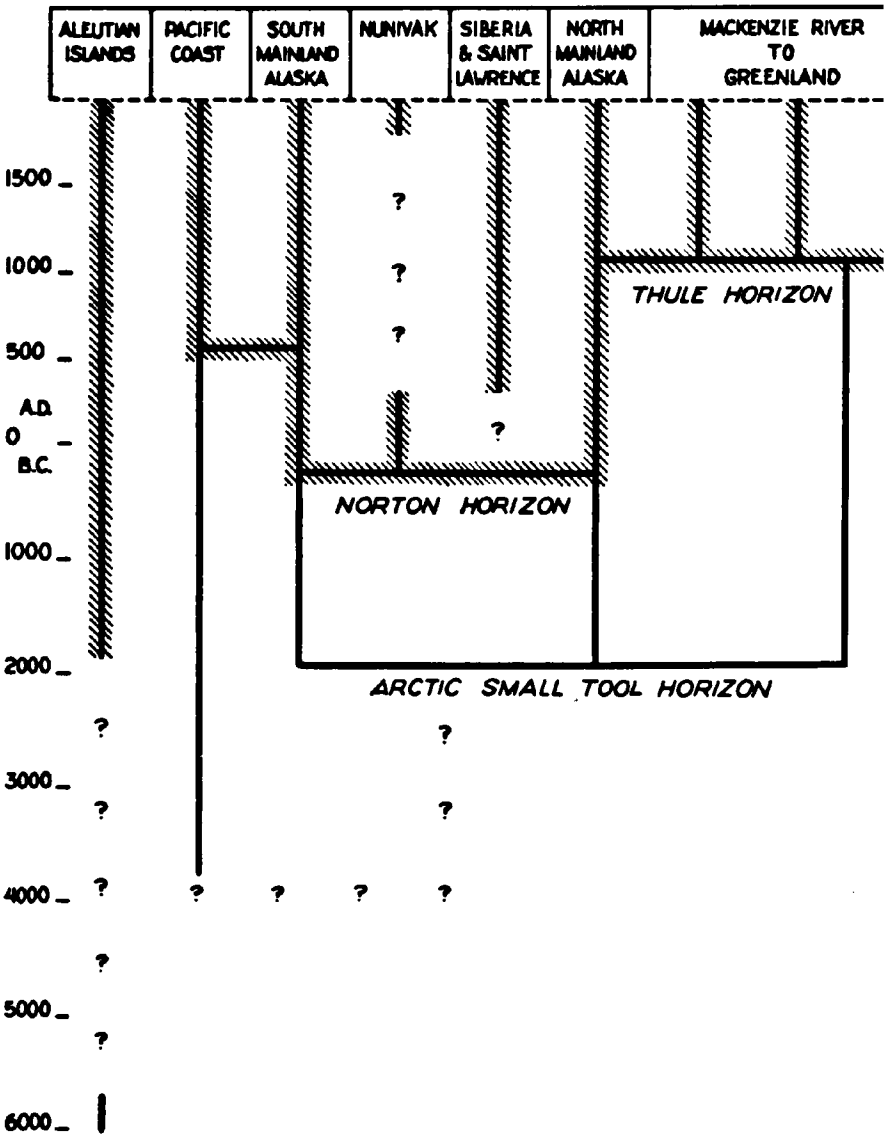

Fig. 3. — Archaeological relationships in the Eskimo-Aleut area. Shaded areas represent connections most nearly in accord with those supported by linguistic evidence.

ESKALEUTIAN SPEAKERS

A family tree embodying a genetic classification of the Eskaleutian languages is given in Figure 2 (see Dumond 1965 for discussion and references). We may consider that each vertical line should represent a single social group which exists now or existed at some time in the past. Proceeding from latest to earliest, one would infer the previous existence of at least these groups:

1. A group ancestral to the modern speakers of the closely related Eastern Eskimo dialects, which now extend from Norton Sound to Greenland.

2. A group ancestral to the not-so-closely related Western Eskimo dialects, which now extend from Norton Sound to Prince William Sound, adjoining the speakers of Aleut on the Alaska Peninsula.

3. A group ancestral to both the Eastern and the Western Eskimo languages.

4. A group ancestral to speakers of all Eskimo languages on the one hand, and speakers of Aleut on the other.

One may phrase these expectations as hypotheses, to be tested by archaeology or by a resort to existing archaeological literature. For if there were groups such as these, each of them would be expected to have had a single set of tools; and when each group first broke up and spread — as implied by the horizontal lines — the tool assemblage of the first migrant generations should have been virtually identical, no matter how much the tools of their descendants changed thereafter.

Figure 3 presents a family tree of archaeological collections — drawn with a certain amount of freedom — which has resulted from a search of existing literature (Dumond 1965, with references). It is clear that the figure created by the shadowed lines is not altogether different from that formed in the linguistic diagram. The most noticeable differences in the figure as a whole are caused by the fact that while groups of tools may be considered to have had multiple parents — and it was this fact which enticed those interested in the "building of culture" — a similar multiple parentage is not expressed in a genetic classification of languages. The lines which are shadowed, in Figure 3, are done so simply to indicate those points at which archaeological horizons seem most nearly to coincide with linguistic ones.

These two diagrams embody linguistic and archaeological facts. To begin to make prehistory of them, one may argue that at least the horizontal lines which are attested both by linguistic and archaeological evidence must indicate population spread or migration. In Figure 3, there remains one additional horizontal line, the existence of which was not

hypothesized on linguistic grounds; this is that designated the Arctic Small Tool horizon. This is also taken to represent a migration, for the very good reason that before the people represented by this line had moved into the eastern American Arctic and to Greenland, those areas were uninhabited. This horizon is taken by most prehistorians at this time to represent a movement of ancestral Eskimos. The descendants of these first migrants to the east – the Dorset people – were apparently swamped by their migrating cousins of the Thule horizon three thousand years later. A similar swamping may have involved the people of the Pacific coast at about the same time.

Lacking in Figure 3 is a crossbar which would represent the dispersion of the speakers of Eskaleutian. Should this crossbar exist? We may still hypothesize so, on the basis of the linguistic evidence. Should it perhaps connect with the bottom of the vertical which leads ultimately to the Koniag of the Pacific Coast? Perhaps it should. We lack facts upon which to build an answer.

At any rate, the Aleuts and their direct ancestors appear to have occupied the Aleutians for at least 4000 years. And it seems reasonably safe to think that by the beginning of that time, 2000 B.C., an ancestral form of Eskimo was spoken in an area stretching from Bristol Bay to Greenland. The spread of these people coincided with the maximum rise of sea level since the end of the Pleistocene geological epoch, a rise which coincided with the warmest period since the end of the Pleistocene. Ever since that time, as the climate cooled, the Eskimos and their direct ancestors have inhabited coasts which freeze in winter. More than that, they have inhabited *all* of the American coasts which freeze in winter, from the Alaska Peninsula to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which are inhabited by anybody at all, with the exception of the southern coast of Hudson's Bay.

But during that time, the changes which took place in the forms of the tools were such that no one first finding a camp of the Arctic Small Tool people of 2000 B.C., would think that the tools were made by the forebears of those people around Bering Strait, say, who were visited by E. W. Nelson in the 1870's. For the proponents of the "building of culture" have been right, ideas do flow. Makers of the diminutive stone tools which gave the name to the Small Tool horizon next acquired the Asian idea of pottery, then moved on through successive styles of stone implements and pots to the objects of hard ground slate familiar to Nelson. All this *without* a break in the continuity which most of us would consider sufficient to indicate a break in the social unit, to evidence a population replacement.

Back to the questions we began with. When did they come? These ancestral small-tool-making Eskimos apparently were present in the vicinity of Bering Strait as early as about 3000 B.C. Where did they come from? We may hypothesize that they came from the south, because of their very early linguistic connection with the more southerly Aleuts from whom they must have separated before their tools had taken on their diminutive character. Why are they where they are? They are living on a coast to which they have become sufficiently adapted that they apparently prefer it to all other places. There is another implication which must be touched upon: for those fond of migrations from Asia, it now seems clear that there has been no major population influx from Asia by way of Alaska within the past 5,000 years.

And what of earlier times? Here we are in more trouble, and it is partly because of that rising sea level. It is not accidental that our sketch of events is so much more nearly complete after that rise of sea level than before. Much of the evidence we seek must be under water.

Pending the arrival of more facts, we must content ourselves with an expectation: an ancestor of the Eskimo and Aleut peoples will be found, he will have lived before 3000 B.C., and he will be manifested in archaeological resemblances linking the Arctic Small Tool horizon products with those of the earliest Aleuts.

Interestingly, the date of the earliest-known site in the Aleutians (Laughlin and Aigner 1966; McCartney and Turner 1966) is about 6000 B.C. But there is no completely convincing evidence to tie that site closely to *any* other site now known, either in the Aleutians or elsewhere. Still, our pursuit of prehistory takes an important turn here. William Laughlin has argued that the site on Anangula Island represents the earliest Aleuts (Laughlin 1963). And he has suggested that they were there because they were a remnant of a group of people who had lived around the northern edge of the Pacific coastline before the inundation of the Bering Platform, an event placed by geologists somewhere around 11,000 years ago. This hint seems suggestively borne out by the linguist Swadesh who is inclined to connect Eskaleutian and Chukotan, the language of the Chukchis and related people of northeastern Asia (Swadesh 1962; see also Voegelin and Voeglin 1966). Now a new dimension has been introduced, because it is possible to conceive of the Eskimo-Aleut peoples as descended of an ancient north Pacific people who lived before the formation of Bering Strait, who spanned the distance between Asia and America, and who undoubtedly had relatives extending still farther south along the coasts both of America and Asia. But now we are in the realm of vaster speculation, and we have still to consider our second Alaskan people.

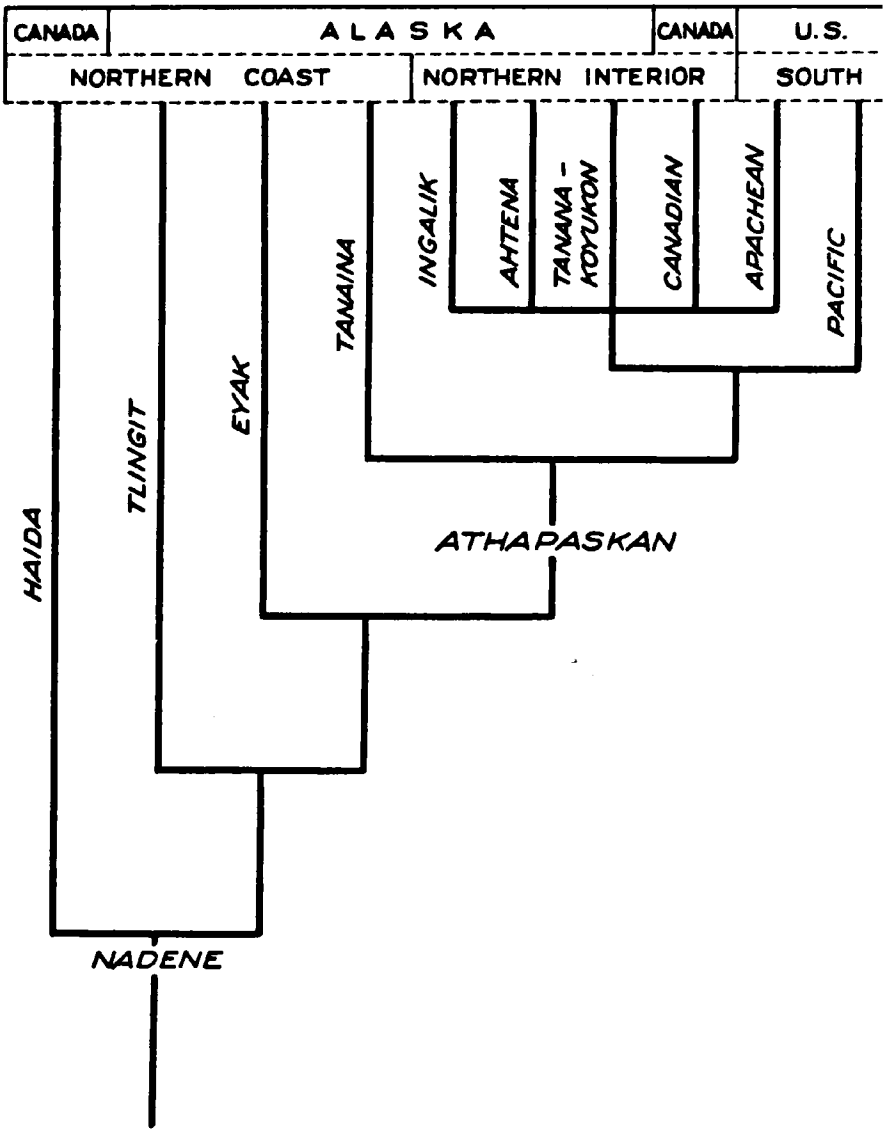

Fig. 4. — Family tree of Nadene (Indian) languages.

NADENE SPEAKERS

If we present a somewhat simplified diagram of Nadene linguistic relationships (constructed after Hoijer 1956; 1962; 1963; Krauss 1964; 1965; Pinnow 1964) as in Figure 4, we can hypothesize the existence of these social groups directly relevant to the prehistory of Alaska:

1. A group ancestral to all Athapaskans, except for the Tanaina.
2. A group ancestral to all Athapaskans.
3. A group ancestral to all Athapaskans and to speakers of Eyak.
4. A group ancestral to speakers of Athapaskan, Eyak, and Tlingit — this would, of course, include all Indians of Alaska itself.
5. A group ancestral to all of these and Haida as well. (Indeed, Haida is linguistically divergent enough that it may not be properly Nadene, but for the present purposes it will be so considered; see Pinnow 1964.)

Immediately, one is drawn to the interesting fact that the most divergent of these languages, Haida, is the farthest south; the second most divergent is Tlingit, which is second farthest south; the third most divergent is Eyak which is immediately north of Tlingit; the fourth most divergent, standing out from all other Athapaskan, is Tanaina, which is just north of Eyak (Figure 1). If one follows the procedure which is recommended by some linguists (Dyen 1956), one would look for the ancient home of Nadene in the region of greatest divergence. This would be, fairly obviously, somewhere in British Columbia—to the south, rather than west across Bering Strait.

Could it be, one might ask, that as a group of people moved north in the wake of a retreating Cordilleran ice sheet at the end of the Pleistocene, perhaps nine or ten thousand years ago, some of them began to work their way westward to the Pacific Coast?

A resort to archaeological evidence at this point is futile. The only fairly secure published sequence for Alaskan Athapaskans, at the site of Dixthada on the Tanana (Rainey 1939), probably extends back no farther than a hundred years or so before the advent of Europeans. Time coverage for Athapaskans outside of Alaska is about equally poor (e.g., MacNeish 1964:348). There are sites which have been reported upon, indeed, but they do not seem relatable in a systematic way either to each other or to modern ethnic groups. A few of these sites are beginning to be dated, such as components in the sequence now being worked out on the Kobuk River by Brown University, following the lead set by Giddings (1962; Douglas D. Anderson, personal communication), in which some presumably Indian (or at any rate, presumably non-Eskimo) occupations of the site occurred earlier than 2000 B.C. Some implements found there may be related to specific implements found

in other sites not only in interior Alaska, but in Canada as well — an area which exceeds that now inhabited by speakers of northern Athapaskan languages (see Ackerman 1964; Campbell 1961; MacNeish 1964: 345-346). It is by no means unlikely that some of these do in fact represent ancestral Athapaskans (e.g., Harp 1962:73), but it seems not yet possible to relate them systematically. Fortunately, work now underway by Alaska Methodist University in interior Alaska (Frederick Hadleigh West) may throw more light on this subject.

We have even fewer facts with which to approach the description of relationships between the coastal Indians and the interior Athapaskans, or indeed of the past of the coastal Indians at all. Such efforts as have been made in that area by archaeologists have provided little information from prehistoric times (e.g., Drucker 1943; de Laguna 1960; de Laguna and others 1964; see also Ackerman 1964-65), and the arguments which have been made regarding the prehistory of the area have proceeded largely from ethnographic comparisons (e.g., Borden 1951; Drucker 1955).

THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA

The approach I have been illustrating up to this point is one designated as the "direct historical" approach, in which one works at prehistory backward, by proceeding from the historically known into the prehistorically unknown. And in doing this, I have been able to sidestep a question of considerable importance. After all, the prehistory of Alaska has been of interest to most American prehistorians not because of an intrinsic interest in speakers of Eskaleutian or of Nadene, but because Alaska is obviously the prehistoric gateway to all America. Knowledge of the peopling of America must include knowledge of the prehistory of Alaska, for there the ancient footsteps of the first intruders in the new land must lie.

I have purposely avoided this question up to now because I have attempted to present the idea of a prehistory as a constructed, systematic relationship of all pertinent facts. There are no such relationships yet convincingly formulated which take account of very early archaeological materials. There are, to be sure, archaeological sites in Alaska and in adjacent parts of Canada for which great age has been claimed. Some of these have been said to be way-stations in the movement of Pleistocene peoples either up the valley of the Yukon or along the Arctic coast, and then down between the Cordilleran and Laurentian ice sheets into Alberta and into the heart of North America.

But there are two things wrong: First of all, all such dates in the north are by guess — some of them informed and probably even accurate

guesses, but still guesses not supported by enough hard evidence to convince hard-headed critics. Second, it has not yet been possible systematically and convincingly to relate these collections to Asia on the one hand and to the heart of North America on the other. And, of course, those rising sea levels destroying early evidence have not helped the cause.

On physical grounds, the American natives are Asian. That they passed over a water-free Bering Platform conforms to the dictates of geology, of geography, and of common sense. But the fact remains that the evidence for an early movement into America from Aisa is not Alaskan evidence. If it is yet known anywhere, it is from farther south in North America.

There, the presence of people has been securely dated at about 11,000 B.C. (Haynes 1964), and although people may well have been there earlier, the putative occupation sites are without exception subject to question. In Alaska, on the other hand, the earliest radiocarbon date, as yet unpublished, is short of that 11,000 B.C. by several millennia. The next earliest are those dates from the site on Anangula Island in the Aleutians, to which I have already referred, of only 6,000 B.C.

But attempts to relate the supposedly earliest Alaskan material to that in more southerly America and in Asia go on, of course. The later tendency is to play down the idea of repeated migration, in the expectation that all or nearly all of the peoples and languages of America, north and south, will be found to be related. One especially sweeping linguistic formulation would set up a "Bask-Dennean" group to include Basque in Europe, the Ural-Altaic languages spread throughout northern Eurasia to the Pacific, and the American groupings of Eskaleutian, Nadene, and Wakashan (spoken on Vancouver Island) as well (Swadesh 1964).

A related movement has been toward conceiving of much of early aboriginal American knowledge, as manifested in the forms of tools, to be a local American development — knowledge arrived at after the earliest immigrants had already reached their new home (Tolstoy 1958). This particular conception has been derived from the absence of comparable archaeological material in Asia on the one hand, and, on the other hand, from the apparent fact that radiocarbon dates for the American industries in question have been earlier from sites in the south of the United States than in the north. But still more recently this view in its turn is being questioned and some vestige of early American stone tools is being sought in Asia (e.g., Haynes 1964; Mueller-Beck 1966). This new questioning betrays not so much an interest in repeated migration as a growing feeling that it is now nearly possible

to begin to relate archaeological facts from North America and archaeological facts from Asia in a meaningful way. Increasing knowledge of the archaeology of Siberia and northern North America is changing that which seems possible to the prehistorian. We may expect evidence of the cultural connection of Asia and America at some time before 11,000 B.C. to be ever more systematically set forth.

And so, although we are left without the ability to answer the questions with which we began, and which seem so simple, we nevertheless may hold the expectation that prehistory will be inflicted upon early times in Alaska — not finally, but over and over again, as we work toward not one but many prehistories of the area. With the growing number of students of Alaska's prehistoric past, this attempt will certainly proceed with vigor, with intelligence, and — hopefully — with imagination.

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ETHNOHISTORICAL RESEARCH IN ALASKA

JAMES W. VANSTONE

Anthropologists commonly think of ethnography as that branch of cultural anthropology which treats cultures systematically in space and time. It differs from archaeology mainly in that it derives its perspectives from, and is primarily concerned with, the life of living peoples. Ordinarily in the study of ethnography, the ethnographer himself is the observer — that is, he goes and lives among a group of people and observes their ways. He questions them, talks with them, studies their way of life, and bases his report upon his own observations. This is not the only kind of ethnography, however. If the ethnographer himself is not the observer, he may attempt to study, evaluate, and interpret the observations of others; primarily of earlier explorers, missionaries, government officials, and those who saw the group in which he is interested and left written records. This is often the only kind of research method that can be used in an area where it is no longer possible for a present day ethnographer to study a group of people. One thinks immediately of the eastern United States where almost all traces of aboriginal Indian life have disappeared. Our knowledge of the Iroquois and Algonquin groups is based almost entirely upon the study of documentary evidence.

It is this type of ethnography that is frequently referred to as ethnohistory. The ethnohistorian differs from the ordinary historian only in that he is primarily interested in what we consider the primitive peoples of the world, and also because he often has at his disposal certain research methods which the ordinary historian does not. Namely, what we might call traditional ethnography — that is observer-type ethnography, and archaeology, which in spite of its orientation toward prehistory, can be used to elucidate historical problems as well.

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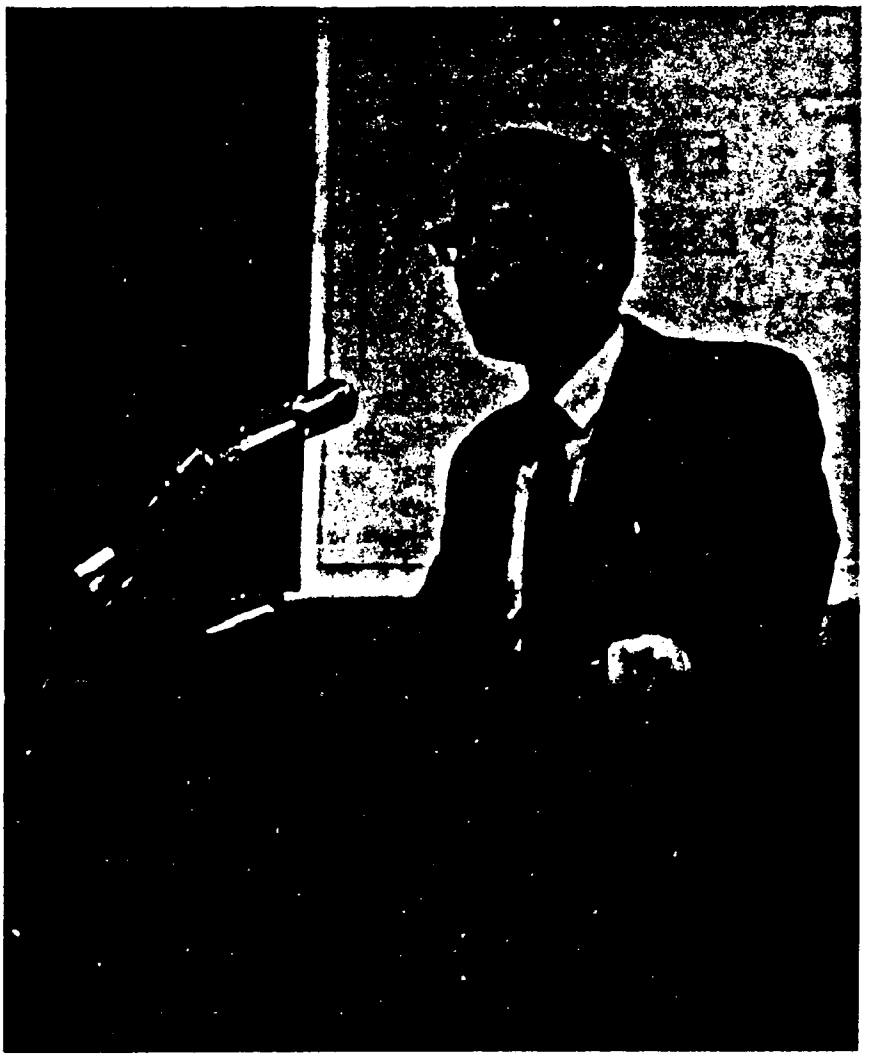


JAMES W. VanSTONE, of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, received his doctorate in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. He has taught at the University of Alaska and the University of Toronto. His books include, Point Hope, an Eskimo Community in Transition (1962), and The Changing Culture of the Snowdrift Chipewyan (1965). His Ethno-Archaeology of Crow Village, Alaska is now in press. Founder and first editor of the Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska, he is on the Advisory Committee of the Arctic Institute of North America. Two manuscripts have been accepted for publication: "An Annotated Ethnohistorical Bibliography of the Nushagak River Region, Alaska" and "An Ethnographic History of the Nushagak River Region, Alaska." Another manuscript, "Tikchik Village: A Nineteenth Century Riverine Community in Southwestern Alaska," has been submitted for publication. He has written some thirty articles, which have appeared in, among other places, Arctic, Pacific Northwest Quarterly, Anthropologica, and Arctic Anthropology.

What, then, are the aims and purposes of ethnohistorical studies? It seems for our purposes they are three-fold. First of all, a primary aim of ethnohistory has been to use the ethnological present to throw light on the archaeological past. This is one end of the direct historical approach that Dr. Dumond was talking to you about. It involves working backward in time from present day cultures to those of the more ancient past. This type of ethnohistory, I think, has been particularly useful when applied in areas where ethnography of the observer-type is practically impossible. Much of the data we have on the protohistoric cultures of the northeastern United States, for example, derives from ethnohistorical data. This is a type of work that has not, unfortunately, been pursued extensively in Alaska, although it is every bit as logical and important here as elsewhere.

A second aim of ethnohistory is to elucidate particular historical problems and events that arise out of the contact of Europeans and aboriginal peoples. With reference to Alaska, a study of the mechanics of the fur trade is an example of this type of approach. Another might be the relationship between Eskimos, Indians, and fur traders; or the relationship between people and missionaries and the changes affected by the latter. One of my own particular interests is the role of Eskimos in the Bristol Bay commercial salmon fishery.

Third, we often use ethnography, as we do other methods of anthropology, to gain insight into cultural process. We gain access to the problem of cultural stability and change by using records to measure the duration of conservatism, for example, and to detect innovation when it occurs. These kinds of data frequently occur in records and provide a means of projecting the problems of culture stability and change backwards in time from the present and the recent past. The methods of archaeology can be used in the same manner because historical archaeology, in a sense, is simply the excavation of ethnography and it provides the same valuable information about changing material culture — stability, the selection process — as do historical records.

Prehistoric archaeology, as Dr. Dumond has told us, is a branch of anthropology that is being vigorously researched in Alaska. Programs of ethnohistorical research, on the other hand, have been carried out only to a very limited extent so far. For that reason, I am very glad to appear before you at this time to plead the cause of ethnohistory and perhaps to awaken your interest in it. It is not really difficult to see the reason for this neglect. As Dr. Dumond has pointed out, we know that many of the most basic questions about the peopling of the

New World either have been or eventually will be answered on the basis of prehistoric archaeological research in Alaska. It is not suprising, therefore, to find that the bulk of the archaeological attention has been turned toward the most ancient cultures and that late prehistoric and historic problems have been neglected.

It is also true that ethnographers, no longer being able to study the so-called "un-touched" Eskimo cultures, have turned their research attention toward community studies and the community as an on-going entity in Alaska today. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the work of Charles Hughes on St. Lawrence Island, Wendell Oswalt on the Kuskokwim and my own work in northwest Alaska. These studies are, for the most part, lacking in an historical base of any kind. Very frequently the community under discussion seems to exist in a kind of vacuum. One does not see its relationship with the outside world very clearly, nor does one see it as the end-point in a long process of cultural change, the most significant aspects of which, perhaps, took place during the nineteenth century.

At any rate, ethnohistorical work has not been vigorously pursued, but neither has it been totally neglected. I will mention examples of the work that is being done and then move on to a more detailed discussion of my own research in order to suggest some of the problems the ethnohistorian faces and the tools with which he works.

Initially, it is necessary to mention the work of Frederica De Laguna among the Yakutat Tlingit. She is the real pioneer among Alaska ethnohistorians, and the first person to systematically utilize the research methods of history, ethnography, and archaeology for the purpose of understanding culture change. Her studies of the Yakutat area, begun in 1949, give a very complete picture of the Tlingit of this region from late prehistoric times to the present. Another notable example of ethnohistoric research is the work of Wendell Oswalt along the Kuskokwim River. Oswalt's studies began in 1954 with traditional ethnography reconstructed from discussions with Eskimo informants. He then moved on to the study of a modern community, Napaskiak, and lately has worked backward in time, emphasizing the problems of culture change during the nineteenth century. One of the published results of this has been his book on Moravian activity along the Kuskokwim. Oswalt's work, and my own on the Nushagak River, also in southwestern Alaska, are closely related because of our common interest in nineteenth century culture change, and our utilization of some of the same research materials.

In 1963 I began ethnohistorical research in the Nushagak River region for the purpose of assessing the impact of what I have referred

to as various "agents of contact" upon the Eskimos of the area. This turned out to be a very rich area for such study because of the abundant documentary materials available. The presence of people who could be relied upon to provide some ethnographic information, and the possibility of carrying out archaeological research in nineteenth century sites were also factors in the selection of this region. In effect, I have attempted to utilize the research methods of ethnography, history and archaeology to elucidate the impact of explorers, traders, missionaries, commercial fishermen, miners, reindeer herders, education and health services, etc., on the people of a particular area from the time of earliest contact up to the present. This involved, first, a rather extensive study of published and archival materials from this area. I attempted to obtain all the information I could from the various published and archival source materials on population, locations and names of settlements, subsistence patterns, etc.

Then, in 1964, I went into the field and visited as many of these old settlements as possible, particularly those for which I had names and population estimates. In addition, I stopped in the three present day villages along the Nushagak River and discussed with informants the location of old settlements and tried to get as much ethnographic information as possible that would apply to my nineteenth century interests. This enabled me to start out with a reasonably accurate idea of population distribution in the region and a background of ethnographic facts.

In the following years I have continued this type of research along the Nushagak and, at the same time, have initiated archaeological excavations at sites occupied during the nineteenth century. In 1965 I excavated a site in the Tikchik Lake area for which there is good documentation. It was visited first by I. F. Vasilev in 1829, and abandoned at the time of the influenza epidemic of 1899-1900. In addition, there was one individual still surviving who had been born in the settlement, and it was possible to bring him to the village during the excavations. I thus had the unusual opportunity for an archaeologist of being able to talk to a former inhabitant of an archaeological site while excavation was in progress. Excavation of another nineteenth century site, this time along the middle Nushagak River, was undertaken during the summer of 1967.

But I am not here to discuss my own work in detail. What I would like to do, using my Nushagak work as an example, is to suggest to you some of the kinds of research materials that are available to the student of nineteenth century Eskimo culture and to stress the very

limited extent to which this material has been utilized by anthropologists in the past.

Remember that we are dealing with three methodological dimensions; historical, ethnographic, and archaeological. Taking the historical dimension first, it is worth noteing two large collections of archival materials, both of vital importance to anyone undertaking ethnohistorical research concerning Russian America. The first is the records of the Russian-American Company in the National Archives. With the help of Professor Raymond Fisher of the University of California, Los Angeles, and one of his graduate students, Oswalt and I have been going through these materials systematically. We have extracted and translated, at the present time, everything dealing with the Kuskokwim and the Nushagak, particulary with the activities around Aleksandrovsky Redoubt at the mouth of the Nushagak River from which most of southwestern Alaska was opened to the fur trade. This source is tremendously valuable as far as it relates to the mechanics of the fur trade and the way in which the Eskimos of southwestern Alaska were brought into the trade. I think that the time will come when we, as students of this area, may know as much about the fur trade as do those students of northern Canada who have utilized the records of the Hudson's Bay Company. There is other material in the Russian-American Company records, of course, including population information and a good deal of ethnographic data. There is also much information concerning relationships between traders, missionaries and the Eskimos. Only a very small amount of this relates to the Nushagak-Kuskokwim and the records are also particularly valuable for students of the Kodiak Eskimos and the Aleuts.

Another important source for the Russian period of Alaska's history is the Alaska Russian Church Archives deposited in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress in 1,062 box-portfolios. This material, except for the vital statistics, has not been microfilmed, nor is there an adequate index. The vital statistics for the Nushagak mission provide a complete record of baptisms and various other rites in the Orthodox Church from 1841 until 1931, invaluable material for population studies that can be used in many other ways as well.

In addition to these two important archival sources for the Russian period, I also relied heavily on published materials, particularly the writings of Tikhmenev, Zagoskin, Veniaminov, Wrangell, Khromchenko, Etolin, and others. All of this material is more readily available, of course, because it is published.

For the American period, U.S. government records have been extremely useful. These include the Fish Commission reports for the

Bristol Bay area, census reports, the Geological Survey reports, annual reports of the Governor of Alaska, and the publications of the Moravian Church.

Turning to the ethnographic dimension, we are on much less happy ground. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it is about thirty years too late to be carrying out ethnographic work in this area. There are very few people alive who remember even the end of the nineteenth century, and much of the ethnographic data that is collected must be obtained second-hand. Actually, this is not completely out of the question. There are many histoically minded people in the Nushagak villages, as there are in other parts of Alaska, who remember very well what they learned from their fathers and elderly relatives. They can often provide reliable information on the locations and names of settlements and settlement pattern data generally. The informant I worked with while excavating in the Tikchik Lake area was able to give valuable information on the trapping areas of the region, trips to the Nushagak post and the hunting cycle through the years. When one takes this ethnographic work and combines it with the historical data, it is possible to obtain a rather complete picture of traditional Eskimo life in this region. But it must be admitted that it is really too late to carry out the kind of ethnographic reconstruction that one would like.

The archaeological dimension has also been less useful than one might think, although at the same time, when taken together with the other methodological approaches mentioned, it has been extremely helpful. Much useful information has been recovered about the nature of change through a detailed study of the trade goods recovered for archaeological sites. The study of bottles, tin cans, crockery and like materials may not seem very edifying, but it is surprising how much data these objects provide about stability and changes in material culture.

One of the problems that has concerned both Oswalt and myself as far as our Kuskokwim-Nushagak work is concerned, has been our failure to be able to differentiate stratigraphically between the Russian and American periods of occupation in the sites which we have excavated. This has been true of the Tikchik Lake site in the Nushagak area where I worked and also at Crow Village on the Kuskokwim which Oswalt and I investigated together. It has seemed to us as if, in some ways, the techniques of archaeology are too gross for dealing with the very short time periods that we have here. After all, the period with which we are dealing only runs from approximately 1830 to 1910; this may be too short a time period to be dealt with by normal archaeological methods. However, at Kolmakovski Redoubt

on the central Kuskokwim, where Oswalt has been working for the past two years, it may be possible to separate the Russian and American periods stratigraphically and to obtain some insight into the types of trade goods belonging to each period.

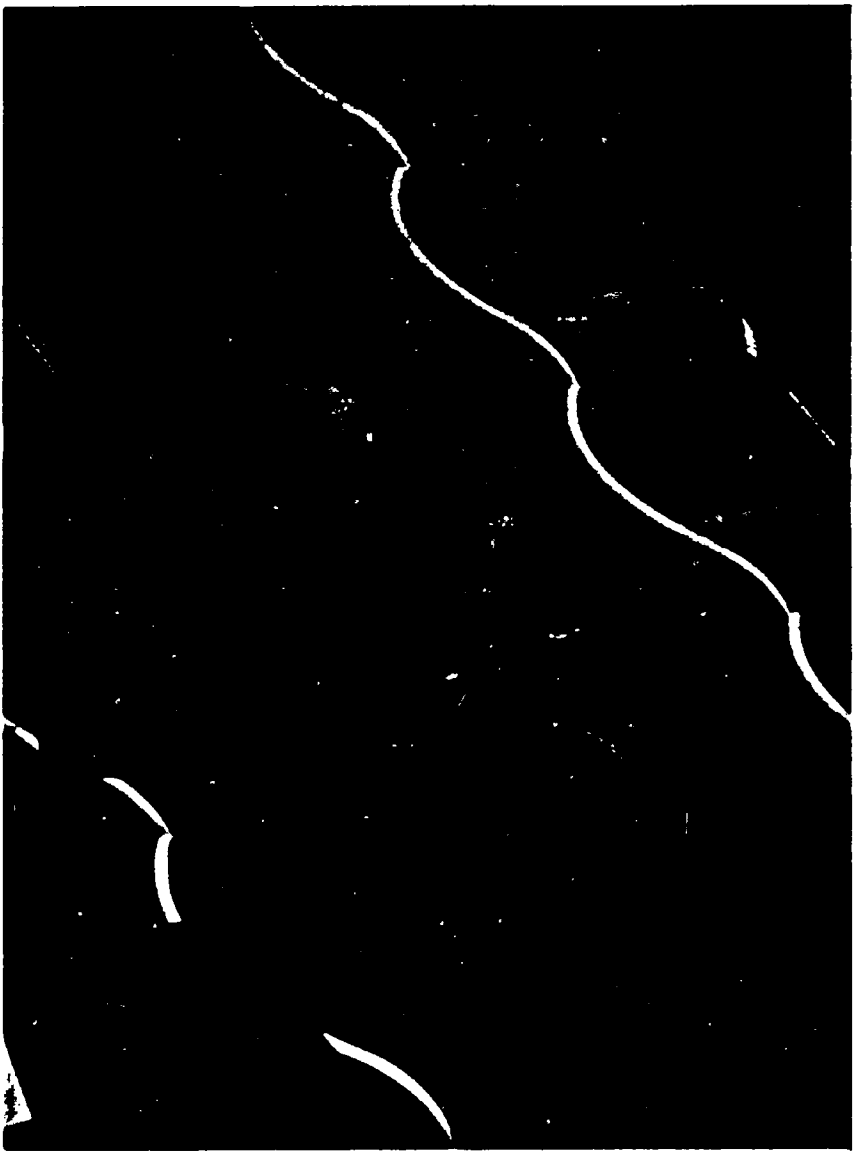
But I do not want to belabor these points. I would suggest that there are other areas in Alaska where ethnohistorical research might profitably be carried out and where some start has already been made. I think particularly of the Cook Inlet region where Joan B. Townsend of the University of Manitoba has been working. There is much documentary material for this area to go along with the information that can be obtained by means of ethnography and archaeology.

Seward Peninsula may be one of the best regions in the north for ethnohistorical studies. The work of Dorothy Jean Ray on settlement patterns in that region is a good start toward our understanding of nineteenth century culture change there. The Lower Yukon should be an excellent area, particularly in the region of the Eskimo-Athapaskan boundary near the mouth of the Innoko River where we have Zagoskin's extremely detailed descriptions of settlements — their sizes and related ethnographic data — and where Frederica De Laguna, many years ago, carried out an important archaeological survey. The Aleutian Islands, of course, and Kodiak suggest themselves immediately because of the large amount of published historical data by various explorers, information in the Russian-American Company records, the works of Veniaminov, etc.

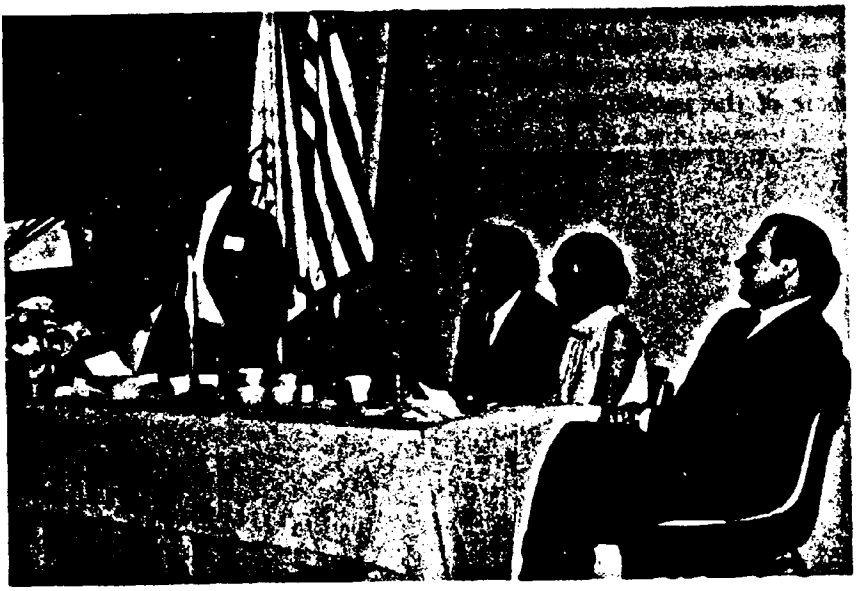
In conclusion, I hope I have made the point that by combining several research methods, we can go a long way toward establishing a firm historical perspective from which to view contemporary Eskimo and Indian culture in Alaska. I think that is the main value of the type of research described here. The ethnohistorical approach may seem simplistic, but it does give us a good background for understanding contemporary cultures, something we do not have at the present time.

These are comments that I should be addressing to a gathering of anthropologists as well as historians, because it is to both groups that one must make a plea for the importance of the nineteenth century in Alaska. It is an interesting period, and one in which most of the vital changes in Eskimo and Indian life took place. These were far reaching changes about which we at present know very little. It is my hope that, in the future, as historians and anthropologists are attracted to ethnohistorical research, the results will be embodied in the classroom approach of people like yourselves who will be encouraged to "spread the word" about Alaskan culture history. I remember how disappointed I was a number of years ago when I was working in an Alaskan coastal town

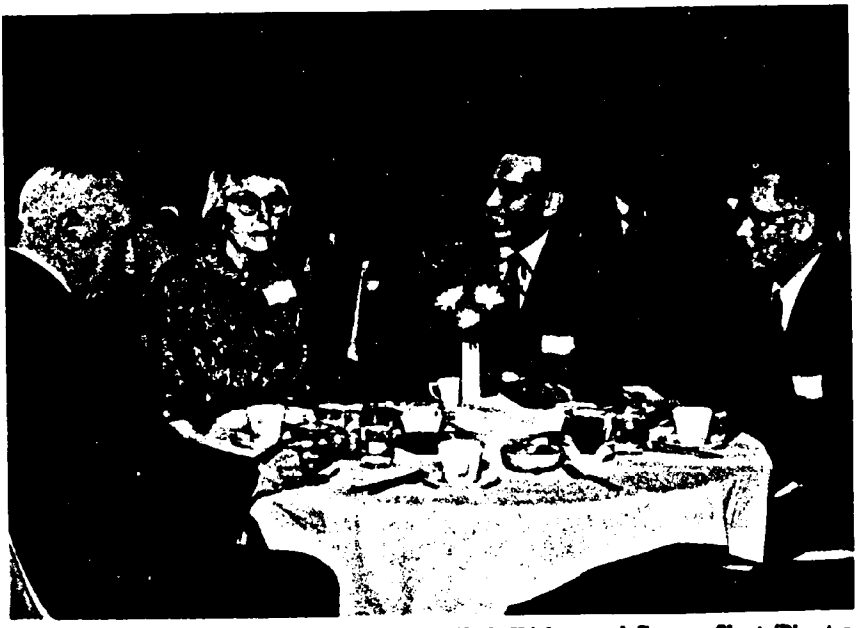
and a local high school student told me that his teacher had said the area had no history! A comment like this suggests that ethnohistorical studies have been neglected too long. I hope that I have suggested here some of the possibilities that are inherent in this type of research.



Herman Slotnick (top left) and Orlando Miller (bottom right)



(left to right) Senator Gruening, Morgan B. Sherwood, Robert Frederick, Mrs. Sherwood and President Frederick P. McGinnis (AMU)



(left to right) Victor Straub, Jeannette Nichols, Herb Hilcher, and Eugene Short (Director, Anchorage Community College)

RUSSIAN ALASKA

. . .
I love the pomp of Nature's fading dyes,
The forests, garmented in gold and purple,
The rush of noisy wind, and the pale skies,
Half-hidden by the clouds in darkling billows,
And the rare sun-ray and the early frost,
And threats of grizzled Winter, heard and lost.

Each time that Autumn comes I bloom afresh;
For me, I find, the Russian cold is good;
. . .
My horse is brought; far out onto the plain
He carries his glad rider, and the frozen
Dale echoes to his shining hooves, his mane
Streams in the keen wind like a banner blowing,
And the bright ice creaks under him again.
But day soon flickers out. At the forgotten
Hearth, where the fire purrs low or leaps like wind,
I read, or nourish long thoughts in my mind.
. . .
And thoughts stir bravely in my head, and rhymes
Run forth to meet them on light feet, and fingers
Reach for the pen, and the good quill betimes
Asks for foolscap. Wait: the verses follow.
Thus a still ship sleeps on still seas. Hark: Chimes!
And swiftly all hands leap to man the rigging,
The sails are filled, they belly in the wind —
The monster moves — a foaming track behind.

It sails, but whither is it our ship goes? . . .

— Alexander Pushkin
"Autumn" 1833

THE RUSSIAN PERIOD OF ALASKAN HISTORY

RICHARD A. PIERCE

Like other fields of history, the study of Russian America may be approached in several ways. These approaches differ widely; each having its own justification and its own devotees. The pragmatic approach seeks to connect the past with the present. In what may be called the humanist approach, it is maintained that any period of man's endeavor is worthy of study as an aspect of human behavior and experience. Finally, there is the antiquarian approach, with interest in knowledge for its own sake.

The Russian period of Alaskan history might at first glance seem to have little relation to the present. The Russian era, though long, ended abruptly, its trends broken off, its influence apparently enduring only in minor degree.

Yet, as may be seen by a look at the map, this is far from true. The very shape of modern Alaska is Russian. The Russians accomplished considerable exploration, laid claims to territory, and established settlements which became the Alaskan towns and communities of today. This influence was reflected in the agreements of 1824 and 1825 with the United States and Great Britain. Had the Russians done less, the Alaska of today would have been smaller. Had they done more – and recall that the ambitions of Shelikhov, Baranov and Rezanov extended as far south as San Francisco – Alaska might now be much larger. Had the Russian government sent out more men of the caliber of Baranov, and backed them up with funds, colonists and ships, the shape of the Pacific coastal states and British Columbia might now be much different.

Russia also laid the basis for the Alaskan economy. Her colonists made the first tentative experiments with agriculture. They began the exploitation of timber resources and fisheries. The geologists Doroshin and Furuhjelm began the investigation of mineral resources, particularly coal, which was mined on the Kenai peninsula. The fur trade became established quite early and gained a considerable share of the world market.

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RICHARD A. PIERCE, Professor of History, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, is a specialist in the Russian eastward expansion. Recent books include Russia's Hawaiian Adventure (1965) and Russian Central Asia, 1867-1917: A Study in Colonial Rule (1962). Currently he is editing a new edition of P. A. Tikhmenev's Historical Review of the Russian-American Company (1867), and working on a study of the post-Baranov period of Alaskan history. His articles have appeared in, among other places, the Journal of the West and the Pacific Historical Review. Recently, he was a Fulbright research fellow in Finland, Russia, and England. In 1968 and 1969, he will be on a sabbatical leave which will be spent in Finland, the USSR, and Alaska, doing further research and writing.

During the later period of Russian rule, some effort was made at conservation of fur resources. In addition, coastal shipping was established, communications were maintained between the far-flung Russian posts and settlements, and trade carried on with Victoria, San Francisco and other points.

The basis of race relations was laid in the Russian time. The native population became accustomed to contact with outsiders and with modern trade and transportation. Many worked for the Russian-American Company; many were converted to Christianity. The surviving presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska even today is an indication of the efforts of the early missionaries and the support they received from the Russian-American Company.

This groundwork made it easier for the United States to assume rule over Alaska in 1867. As we know, however, the natives came out second best in the change of masters, for many were conspicuously worse off under American rule than they had been under the paternal Russian rule. As a matter of fact, we of today might well study the Russian period in this regard. The Russians have always been freer of racial feeling than other peoples. Thus, the large Alaskan "creole" population — the products of mixed marriages between Russians and natives — met no prejudice and produced a number of highly useful individuals.

For example, A. F. Kashevarov (1808-1866), the son of a teacher on Kodiak, was sent to Russia, trained in navigation and commanded ships of the Russian-American Company for many years. In 1838, he headed an expedition which went 30 miles east of Point Barrow, and he later helped prepare maps for an atlas of the Pacific coast. Andrei Glazunov, another creole, explored the lower Yukon in 1835. Two other creoles, Arkhimandritov and Kadin, also commanded company vessels. Others were cartographers, interpreters and minor company officials. Clearly, there was a human resource in Alaska which the Russians could use, but which has been neglected ever since, just as it has seldom been used properly elsewhere in North America.

Other very concrete uses of the past may be seen in the evidence drawn from the Russian records to support the cases of the contenders in the disputes over sealing in the Bering Sea and over the Alaska boundary, both involving questions of great importance for Alaska.

The humanist approach, the study of the region in isolation, for its own sake, simply as an example of human endeavor, is also applicable. Thus we may form a picture of a region which until then was untouched by outside influence. From the Russian accounts we can learn much about the native culture before it was modified by later settlement and contact. Unfortunately there was only one Veniaminov, but many details

about native life may be gleaned from the accounts and reports of the early voyagers, of Company officials, and of visiting scientists.

From the same materials we can also learn how the Russians adapted to their New World environment, how they used it, and to what extent they studied it. Much more attention could be given the work and writings of the agent of the Russian Academy of Science, I. G. Voznesenskii (d. 1871), who was in Alaska and California from 1840 to 1845, collecting specimens and making copious notes, none of them yet published.

A great deal more could be learned of the exploration of this region under the Russians, of their attempts at education and medical service, and of the history of the Russian Orthodox and Lutheran churches.

The antiquarian approach also lends itself to the study of this region and of its history, though the results may be uneven. The researcher along this line may occupy himself with practically anything — historical figures of local significance, details of wearing apparel, weaponry or diet, or the rigging or tonnage of ships. He may lose sight of larger questions. Of course, the person undertaking this type of research, untrained, with misplaced enthusiasm, may actually prove detrimental to the very cause he seeks to serve. Thus, in anthropology or ethnology the pot-hunter or skull or arrowhead collector may spoil sites deserving more sophisticated study. In history, the amateur may disregard what is actually significant, or may sit on source material until his house burns or heirs dispose of his possessions. Even at best, his work may still suffer from his lack of training enabling him to relate his efforts to larger questions, from lack of communication with other researchers, or from lack of an outlet for his findings. If these can be provided, however, the local investigator may do work of real value in producing information, and in building up evidence. If enough small facts are accumulated and are made available to others, they can lead to larger conclusions.

Therefore, there is merit in the work of the sharp-eyed amateur who discovers relics or new sites, or who finds new facts in historical literature. One sees the fruit of this in the work of the local historical societies, whether in publications, or in the placing of historical monuments, or in preparing restorations. Much more can be done, in the study of Alaskan place names; more can be done concerning the identification of sites, such as where the Russians put their copper plates and crests by which they laid claim to the country, where their posts were located, and where they travelled. The survival of Russian words in the native languages also merits local study.

All three approaches, then, have their place in the study of Russian America. It is clear that there are many links connecting Alaska's present with its Russian past, and ample reasons why that 140-year period

must be known if we are to understand the present. In crass terms alone — and these must sometimes be cited — history has been involved to an important degree in the year-long round of centennial observances, and is of perennial worth in attracting national attention and in captivating tourists. The study of early Alaskan history can help to foster regional pride, and to put the Alaskan story before the world. Through history, we give the life of any region depth, a third dimension. Life then becomes not just tonight's TV program or tomorrow's clambake, but is enriched by the revival of past decades.

Assuming, then, the study of Russian America to be worthwhile, what equipment have we at hand with which to pursue it? There has accumulated, first of all, a sizeable amount of material in the English language, with which anyone may begin and, for those a little better situated linguistically, some material in French and German. One of the earliest works on the Russian effort in Alaska was that of a young British clergyman, William Coxe, who toured in Russia and in 1780 published his *Account of the Russian Discoveries between Asia and America*. In it he describes the movement along the Aleutians which occurred after Bering, with extracts from the writings of the naturalist Steller, reports of some of the Russian skippers, and in later editions an extract of Shelikhov's description of the first permanent post on Kodiak. Coxe is sometimes inaccurate, but his book is still valuable, presenting the first unified account of the Russian endeavor in the North Pacific, including its main economic motive force, the Russo-Chinese trade at Kiakhta.

After Coxe's work came those of various explorers sent to investigate the Russian efforts. Thus, the accounts of Cook, Vancouver, Portlock, Broughton, Meares, Dixon, and La Perouse. Still more was conveyed by the translation of G. I. Shelikhov's book into English (1795), and by translation of the work of Martin Sauer, who was with the Billings expedition of 1784-1794. More came with translation of works by leaders and participants in Russian round-the-world expeditions — Lisianskii, Kotzebue, Golovnin, and Langsdorf. Another body of material is found in accounts of trading voyages to the Northwest Coast, by James Colnett, Amasa Delano, Richard Cleveland, and Peter Corney, to mention only a few.

From the 1820's until 1867 relatively little material was published on Russian America. Sir George Simpson's *Narrative of a Journey Round the World during the years 1841 and 1842* with his impressions of the Russian colonies, the seldom used work of Baron Kittlitz, and a few shorter accounts are all that have appeared until the accounts of Whymper and a few others written at the time of the sale of Alaska.

In 1885, appeared the first major American work on the subject,

Bancroft's *History of Alaska*. Systematic, well supported by research in printed sources and manuscripts, it is still indispensable, in spite of errors and much that is omitted or inadequately covered.

Later, came the works of Frank A. Golder, and subsequently of Clarence Andrews and Hector Chevigny, dealing specifically with the Russian period, and the general Alaskan histories by Stuart Ramsay Tompkins, and others. We also have English translations of Soviet works, such as S. B. Okun's *Russian American Company* (1951) and of A. I. Andreev's collection of documents concerning Shelikhov.

All of these books give the historian interested in Russian America a good start. They contain a wealth of facts; and there is still much to be found in them.

Such materials only open the way, however, to the essential and much greater store of works in the Russian language. There are many works on the Siberian origins of the thrust of Russian enterprise to Alaska. V. N. Berkh, and K. E. von Baer in the 19th century and L. S. Berg and other writers in the 20th century tell us much of the Bering expeditions and of the exploration of the Aleutians. K. T. Khlebnikov, writing in the 1830's, did valuable service with his biography of Baranov, his shorter articles on Shelikhov and other figures, and two lengthy descriptions of the Russian American Company and its history. None of these have been translated into English.

One of the most valuable Russian works, however, is Tikhmenev's *Historical Survey of the Formation of the Russian American Company* (St. Petersburg, 1861-1863, 2 vols). This massive account, written in an effort to justify Russian-American Company rule in Alaska, is not only a detailed history but presents many documents, including long letters and reports by Shelikhov, Baranov and Rezanov, which give fascinating glimpses of the personalities of these men.

A great deal of other material may be found in Russian periodicals. The *Morskoi Sbornik* (Naval miscellany), published from the 1840's to 1917, includes many articles regarding Russian America and the Russian America and the Russian round-the-world voyages. There are, however, only two sets of this journal in the United States — one at the Library of Congress and the other at Harvard. The *Zapiski* (notes) of the Russian Hydrographical Department, another valuable source, appears to exist nowhere but in the U.S.S.R. There are a great many other articles in short-lived Russian periodicals of the 19th century, often very hard to find.

The main problem of working with this material, whether in Russian, as well as English or other languages, is rarity. No one library, anywhere, has even a sizeable fraction of the total material on Russian

America. There are bibliographies (some of which are themselves rare), but even after he knows what he is looking for the researcher must lose valuable time in getting to where the material may be found. Inter-library loan is slow and cumbersome, microfilming and xeroxing demand special funds, and most old newspaper and periodical files can only be used in the libraries where they are located. The researcher on Russian America must therefore plan his work around somehow getting to Cambridge, New Haven, New York, Washington, Berkeley, Seattle, Vancouver, Helsinki, or Moscow and Leningrad if he is to master his subject.

Manuscript sources, essential to scholarship in this field, are of course mostly in Russian. We are fortunate in having a large portion of the Russian-American Company *Journals of Correspondence* kept by the Company at Sitka, containing copies or digests of incoming and outgoing correspondence from 1817 to 1867. Unfortunately, the materials before 1817 are missing, probably taken to St. Peterburg when Baranov departed Sitka, and finally destroyed, with most of the rest of the Company files, a few years after the sale of Alaska. The materials from 1817 to 1867 were turned over to the U. S. authorities at the time of the sale, retained by the State Department for many years, and eventually placed in the National Archives. Now anyone can get the entire set on 77 rolls of microfilm for about $325. The rub, of course, is in reading this material, and in finding one's way through it. A calendar of the documents has been started at the University of California at Los Angeles, but has proceeded slowly because of lack of funds and personnel. A program for selecting, translating and publishing documents of particular interest is badly needed.

There is also a collection of documents from the Russian archives of which Frank Golder obtained photostats, now at the University of Washington, and never published. There is also the 15-volume typescript, *Alaska History Documents,* at the University of Alaska and in the Library of Congress.

Other manuscript materials connected with Alaskan History may yet be found in the United States or in Europe. Some manuscripts left by Russian-American Company personnel who originated in Finland when it was under Russian rule, are now in the archives there or in the hands of their descendants.

However, the greater part of manuscript materials on Russian America, as one would expect, is to be found in the U.S.S.R. Frank Golder's *Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives* (Washington, D.C. 1917, 1937) indicates some of this material, and there is undoubtedly much more. S. B. Okun's *The Russian American Company,* A. I. Andreev's collection of documents concerning G. I. Shelikhov, L. S.

Berg's valuable works on Bering and Chirikov, A. V. Efimov's works on early Russian explorations of North America and M. I. Belov's works on eastern Siberian explorations are all based on archival sources. The *Atlas of Geographic Discoveries in Siberia and in Northwestern America in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, which appeared in 1964, contains many highly interesting old maps not previously published.

In addition, new finds are still being made. In the 1930's, about 15,000 documents were found in a barn at Vologda, U.S.S.R. These documents had belonged to Buldakov, G. I. Shelikhov's son-in-law and a director of the Russian American Company. None have ever been published and although two Soviet scholars I talked to last year dismissed them as being "of little value," containing a great deal of petty detail about business and family matters, one could expect that a careful sifting of this mass of material could reveal useful facts.

A similar find was made at Tot'ma, where the personal papers of Ivan Kuskov, assistant of Baranov, one time manager of Fort Ross in California, with a total of thirty years of service in North America, came to light. One may conclude from such examples that a great deal of new material on Alaskan history may yet be found.

After this brief survey of the materials available, one may ask what, specifically, needs to be done with regard to the Russian period of Alaskan history? The answer is — practically everything. The primary need is to develop early Alaskan history to the degree achieved long since by historians of other parts of this continent. It is a task requiring painstaking effort and attention to detail. Bancroft and later writers have given us the broad outlines of the story, and in general this story is probably largely correct. However, this information is at best second-hand. We miss out on details concerning many things, from which may arise new insights, and new problems.

More research should be directed toward development of biographies of personages of Russian America. Rezanov and Baranov have been given separate but not definitive treatment. Shelikhov has yet to have a book devoted to him. Lebedev-Lastochkin, his rival, who established the first posts on the mainland, would be worth an article at least. Veniaminov and his extensive writings merit much more attention.

All too little is known about the chief managers of Russian America after Baranov, although they ruled Alaska for forty years, until the transfer, and many rose to high rank in the Imperial navy and administration after returning to Russia. Ianovskii, who married Baranov's daughter and later took monastic vows, left an account of his voyage to America and his stay at Sitka which should be most revealing if one could find it — it was put out in Russia in a very limited edition of 50 copies.

Baron Ferdinand Wrangel wrote a great deal concerning Alaska; his works deserve closer study. Chief managers Etolin and Furuhjelm both left manuscript materials. Quite a bit can be pieced together concerning Prince Maksutov, the last chief manager. All of the others – Hagemeister, Murav'ev, Chistiakov, Kupreanov, Teben'kov, Rosenberg, Rudakov, and Voevodskii – remain shadowy figures, on whom there are only a few biographical details, and who are remembered in Alaska only through the name of some glacier, headland or islet.

Much more should be known about other figures – the physicians Govorlivyi, Blaschke, and Frankenhaeuser; the naturalists Voznesenskii, Sahlberg and Holmberg; men who mapped the Alaskan coasts, like Vasil'ev and Ingenstrom, and many others of an assemblage unique to this continent. Details concerning such men can provide clues as to their character and achievements and enable us to assess what they did here.

More could also be done on the maritime fur trade. Dominated by New Englanders, this trade made the Pacific a lake, uniting Sitka with such far-flung places as California, Hawaii, Canton, and Boston. Each voyage was an epic in itself, and although details are often scanty, some of the story can be retrieved. F. W. Howay laid the groundwork for study of these voyages a quarter of a century ago, but little has been done on this subject since his day.

We need also to give closer attention to earlier times, especially to assess the considerable literature put out by Soviet scholars. Thus, in 1948 the Soviet historian A. E. Efimov, in a book concerning early Russian geographic discoveries in the North Pacific, cited a report issued in 1937 by Governor John Troy. This report mentioned the find on the Kenai peninsula of the remains of a village consisting of 31 house sites, obviously very old, and not of native origin, which an American writer of the time suggested might have been built by Russians from ancient Novgorod. Efimov suggested that the houses might have been erected by men lost from the Dezhnev expedition, which penetrated Bering Straits in 1648, and that their intermarriage with native women might have produced a mixed population in the Kenai region which preserved certain Russian culture traits down to the time of Russian occupation, giving rise to rumors of Russians, not connected with later endeavors, to be found in the region.

This story is wild and improbable, yet it appears again in an article by the Soviet historian of the Arctic M. I. Belov, in a recent issue of the *Alaska Review*. This is an item of Alaskan history which requires attention by North American scholars, if only to be laid to rest. However, it would appear that no one has ever investigated further the village site which gave rise to the story.

Other questions deserving further study are the relations of th Russian-American Company with other areas, particularly Siberia, Cal fornia, and Hawaii, and with the Hudson's Bay Company.

Then, there is the question of why Alaska was sold. Quite a bi has been done on different matters concerning the purchase, but mor could be learned concerning personalities, such as the Grand Duke Cor stantine and his followers who strove for years to get rid of Alaska, unti they finally succeeded.

More could also be learned of the details concerning the transfe of Prince Maksutov's activities in 1867 and 1868, of the liquidation c Company holdings, and of the various individuals and groups who pro ited therefrom. According to Golder's *Guide*, there exists in the Russia archives quite a fund of Company correspondence with government mir istries concerning the sale and transfer. This will doubtless be of grea interest when examined and analyzed.

I have tried to review, briefly, some of the materials on Russia America, and what may yet be done in this field. However, interestin though these questions may be, certain prerequisites must be met befor the study of Russian America can begin to develop as it deserves.

First of all, more personnel are needed. Not many, but if ther were at least several in a generation to specialize in this study, it coul go forward. The schools may be able occasionally to turn some talente and interested youth in this direction. The universities should give Ala kan history, including the Russian period, adequate attention.

Also, more specialists in Alaskan history should learn Russian This language does not present an insuperable barrier — Clarence Ar drews learned it by himself, when in his sixties — but it is essential t competence in the earlier period.

In addition, more outlets for scholarly writing are needed. Ther is particular need for a journal of Alaskan history. That requires an ade quate subsidy, perhaps foundation support. Such a journal would pro vide a central outlet for historical work instead of having it scattered fa and wide as at present, among many journals, often overlooked, and wit no feeling of community among interested scholars. Such a journal woul provide a clearing house for knowledge of development in the field, vehicle for criticism, and a key to current bibliography. Fortunately, th University of Alaska Press and the University of Washington Press no promise an outlet for worthwhile longer works, including original studie translations and reprints.

In addition, more bibliographical research is needed, with furthe development of archives and libraries. Instead of having to visit variou places in the United States, and to travel to Finland and the U.S.S.R. t

find required materials, it would be of great help to researchers to have one or two centers develop a collection of most of the major works, in the original and on microfilm or microfiche.

In these endeavors, which would advance the study of all periods of Alaskan history, it may be hoped that Alaska itself will play an important role. It is Alaska which should produce more of the specialists in its history, with all of the insight and enthusiasm which birth there or long residence may provide. A scholarly journal, book publishing, and the development of a major historical research facility should logically appear in Alaska. One may hope that the Conference on Alaskan History will have been the first step toward early realization of these goals.

Stuart Tompkins (top), Mrs. Pierce (hidden), and Richard Pierce (bottom)

Richard Carignan (teacher at Kenai High School) leads conference members to the cello section.

Orlando makes a point! (left to right) Jeannette Nichols, Ted Hinckley (facing camera) Meryam Sherwood (back to camera), Orlando Miller

ANOTHER VIEW OF RUSSIAN AMERICA

A COMMENT

STUART RAMSAY TOMPKINS

Mr. Pierce has covered the ground of Alaskan historiography very thoroughly and there is little to criticize, but my approach to the subject is somewhat different, as is inevitable, and perhaps all to the good. I tend to regard Russian expansion across the Pacific, at first, as an extension over northern Asia. A new factor, however, was interjected by Peter when (urged on by the French Academy of Sciences and Leibniz, who had been taken into the Russian service) he agreed to undertake explorations to find out whether Asia and America were joined.

But it was the lure of the pelts of the sea-otter that drew the hardy fur-hunters or *promyshlenniki* out into these uncharted seas. They had pushed across Siberia in pursuit of sable, ermine, marten and the otter but now they heard of the fabulous prices paid by the Chinese at the ports of entry recently opened on the Russian frontier, and though they were land-lubbers, unskilled in navigation and quite unlettered, they used the vessels left behind by the Bering expeditions, and when these were wrecked, built their own crude homemade craft which they piloted by trial and error, steering by the sun and the stars across the stormy waters of the Pacific in pursuit of the pot of gold. A few became rich; most of them either perished at sea or wore themselves out without attaining the dreamed-of riches.

The Bering expeditions were carefully recorded and full reports were deposited in the Russian archives. Most of the material on these has been translated into English by Golder and others. But it must be borne in mind that these maritime voyages were but one part of the vast scheme foreshadowed by Peter and undertaken and carried out by Bering, *viz.*, the charting of the whole northern coast of Siberia, as well as a sur-

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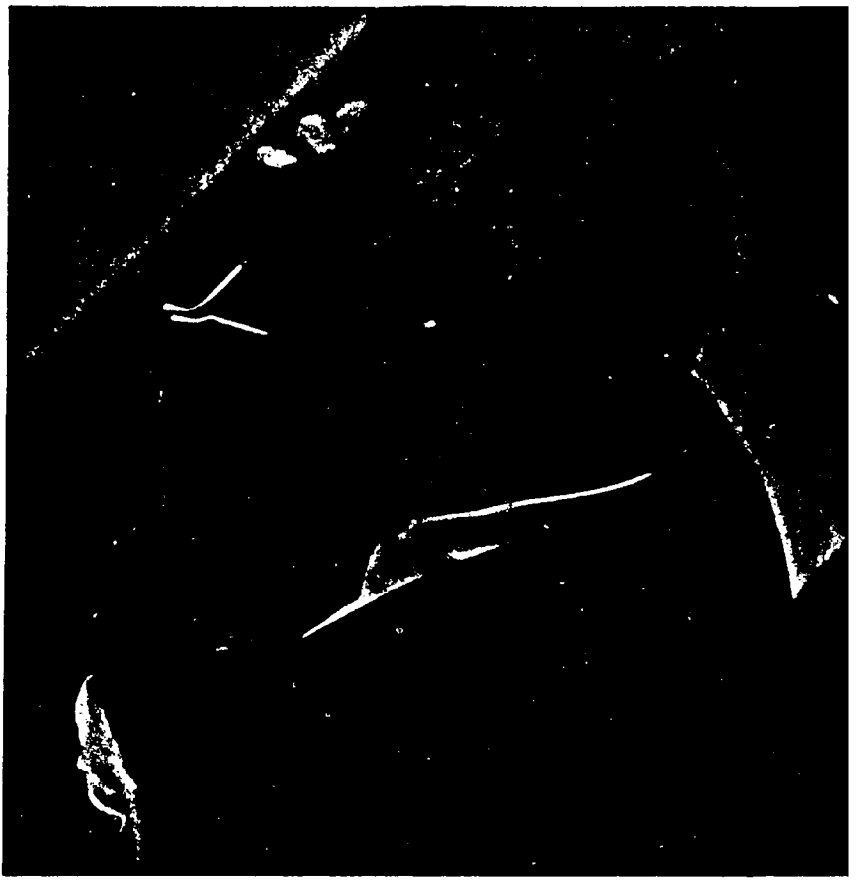

STUART RAMSAY TOMPKINS, born in Lyn, Ontario in 1896, received his doctorate fro the University of Chicago, and is now emeritus professor of Russian history for th University of Oklahoma, where he taught for many years. He is the author of Alaska Promyshlennik and Sourdough (1940). His other books include, The Russian Mind: Fro Peter the Great Through the Enlightment (1953), and Russia Through The Ages (1940). H has written many articles for learned journals, including his long and thorough "Afte Bering: Mapping the North Pacific," which appeared in the British Columbia Historica Quarterly in 1955. He now resides in Victoria, British Columbia, where he continues t write.

vey of Siberia's natural resources and of what records there were in existence of the history of Russia's expansion into these vast solitudes. It is only recently that the Russian government has got around to publishing this material which is now available but of course, has not been translated into English.

This may be of slight interest to Alaskans but I think it should be mentioned because it draws attention to the supreme greatness of Bering. The voyage across the Pacific from the eastern coast of Siberia in which he made a landfall on the American coast was but a small part of what Bering had to carry out. He had already before this spent nearly four years in arranging the voyages down the various Siberian rivers and along the Arctic coast with a view of mapping with some degree of accuracy the more obscure regions. Bering died a miserable and tragic death on a remote Island and I think that his outstanding achievement prior to his American voyage ought to have attention drawn to it, since it is a material proof of his greatness.

Records of Russian activity in these regions for the half-century after Bering are few and far between and what there are give but a meagre picture of what was going on. Yet ships sailed almost every year bound for the remote Aleutian Islands where the sea-otter was to be found in great numbers. Their crude ships piloted by unskillful hands, often came to grief but a few returned with fabulous catches of fur which was sufficient to urge others to emulate their daring. But many, perhaps most of these voyages were either unrecorded or the reports on them were written by unlettered landsmen with no knowledge of navigation or of cartography so that they could not locate accurately where they had been or the distance they had traversed. Not till 1768 was the task undertaken by Catherine to clear up the uncertainty and vagueness of the knowledge of these regions. An expedition under Krenitsyn and Levashev in that year dispatched to the Aleutian Islands. actually pinpointed the exact location of the Fox Islands (as the eastern Aleutians were known). The reports of these voyages have not been recovered but information on their discoveries was soon public property. But the effective occupation of these remote regions was the work of the fur-hunters. There are two sources of information of this phase of Russian activity; the work of Bishop Innokentii on the Aleutian Islands gives us some insight into the means by which the Aleuts were subdued. The other source curiously enough is the reports of Spanish Ambassadors sent back from St. Petersburg from time to time.

The Spanish Bourbon monarch had entered into the so-called "Family Compact" with the France of Louis XIV, providing for reciprocal support of their respective foreign policies. This had been allowed to

lapse but was revived in 1761 when Spain entered the Seven Years' War on the side of France. One result was their renewal of diplomatic relations with Russia which had been discontinued in 1730. The results of Bering's expeditions had gradually become known largely through the efforts of foreign members of the Russian Academy of Science, as well as the efforts of some non-Russian scholars [particularly Wm. Coxe and Wm. Robertson the Scottish historian] and some from the continent. There was reason for Spain to fear that Russian activity in the North Pacific would involve a challenge to her claims to an exclusive monopoly in that area. The Spanish ambassadors were, therefore, instructed to exert themselves to find out just what the Russians were up to. Hence some light is thrown on this otherwise obscure period of expansion and exploration by documents in Spanish records both in Seville and in Mexico City. With all these sources we are enabled to piece together an account of the penetration not only of the Aleutian Islands but after the supply of sea-otter there became exhausted, the further prolongation of their voyages, eastward to the Alaska peninsula, the islands lying off shore, including finally the island of Kodiak.

One further possible source which may help us to clear up the uncertainty by which this period is obscured are the portfolios of Gerhard Friedrich Muller. The great plans drawn up for the second Bering expedition included a survey of the natural resources of Siberia, its fauna and flora, as well as a search of the local archives of Siberia. This work was undertaken by two German members of the Academy of Science. These were Johann Georg Gmelin and Gerhard Friedrich Muller, the former to report on the natural resources, the latter on documentary material to throw light on the country's history. These men travelled together for some years. It was then that Muller was able to tap the priceless stores of the local archives many of whose documents were transcribed by him and sent back to St. Petersburg. Since most of these collections have disappeared, many of them destroyed by fire, the value of these efforts is almost beyond description. It was thus that Muller discovered records of a voyage made by a Cossack named Dezhnev who claimed to have passed around Eastern Cape, from the Arctic Ocean to Bering Strait and Bering Sea. This account of the alleged voyage of Dezhnev is not universally accepted. It was not accepted, for instance, by Professor Frank Golder. Nonetheless it indicates that there exists a considerable body of literature on the activities of the *promyshlenniki* and the Cossacks in this early period. While much of the material deals only with Siberia, some of it, we know, has reference to voyages made by fur-hunters eastward to the Aleutian Islands and the coast of America.

A list of these portfolios is given in Muller's *History of Siberia* and attention is drawn to the fact that only a very few of them have been used. Until Russian scholars themselves get around to using and perhaps publishing them, we will have to wait.

While expeditions undertaken for the considerable profit to be obtained from the furs secured went far towards giving Russia a foothold in America, they did little to clear up the cartography of the northwest coast. It was, therefore, not the Russians but two English navigators, Captain James Cook on his voyage of 1778-79 and Vancouver in the years 1791-1795, who first charted the northwest coast of North America with some degree of accuracy.

To get the background of the expedition of Cook, it is necessary to bring up the subject of the erroneous ideas of cartographers of his time on the geography of the North Pacific.

There had appeared in publications of the early eighteenth century stories of what was alleged to be a strait (or two straits) by which ships had actually been able to pass from the Pacific to the Atlantic with comparative ease. The Hudson's Bay Co. had shown some interest in the stories and various English explorers had sought to locate the Atlantic entrance to such a strait. The Spanish, too, had sent out expenditions on similar quests in the Pacific. To clear up this point, the British Admiralty decided to dispatch the experienced navigator, Captain James Cook, with instructions to endeavour to locate this passage if it existed or to prove its non-existence. A similar expedition was directed to Hudson's Bay in the attempt to locate the eastern entrance. Cook, therefore, examined the northwest coast up to the 60th parallel of latitude and concluding [correctly as it turned out] that there was no such "Strait of Anian," proceeded into Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean, according to instructions. Though he missed the mouths of the Yukon and the Kuskokwim rivers, he did plot accurately the rest of the coast as far north as Bering Strait. His work was carried on some twelve years later by Captain George Vancouver who filled in most of the details and outlined the map of Alaska as far north as the Arctic Ocean, much as it is today.

If the Second Expedition of Bering in 1741 is the first landmark in the history of Alaska, the second is the formation of the Russian American Company in 1799. But before that happened we have the rather unexpected turn of events by which it was not Russia with which Spain had to contend but Great Britain who managed through her clash with Spain to establish a hold on the coast and thus interpose herself between Russia and Spain. This had only an indirect bearing on Alaska.

The formation of the Russian American Company was the wor of Grigorii Ivanovich Shelekhov who had during the reign of Catherin acquired far-reaching interests in the fur trade in the North Pacific. H had finally set about acquiring a monopoly so extensive as to exclud rivals but this Catherine consistently refused as she was a firm believe in free trade. But the accession of her son Paul, gave Shelekhov's amb tions more favorable conditions. Shelekhov died in 1795 but his wife an associates carried on and in 1799 the Russian company took shape an its first charter granted a complete monopoly in Alaskan waters and se forth conditions under which it was to operate, one phase of which regu lated relations with the natives.

I think I probably should digress a bit here. The relation of the natives to the Russians was not finally cleared up till it wa set forth in some detail in the Charter of 1841, which Mr. Pierce wil know as he is editing Tikhmenev. However, these relations were peculia and we might make rash generalizations which would probably b wrong. The Russians undoubtedly did not regard the native populatio of either Siberia or Alaska as the English-speaking people looked o the native populations with whom they came in contact in America Some experience of mine in Siberia brought this home to me. I di covered that the Russian population associated on terms of easy fam liarity with the non-Russians with no apparent sense of racial super ority. The Maritime Province or Oblast' as it is now called, in whic Vladivostok is situated, has a population made up of Russians, Chines Mongols, and Koreans in what would seem equal numbers. They al work side by side, as tellers in the banks, as clerks in stores as *izvozchik* in the queues of cabmen. However, what happened during the conques of the Aleutian Islands should be borne in mind. The Russians unques tionably used the most savage means to crush the native population an reduce them to a condition bordering on servitude. By the terms of th third charter the practice of the Russian American Company of enrollin Aleuts in their service for taking pelts of the sea otter and other fu bearing animals was given official sanction. The result was the Aleu and not the Russians hunted the sea otter, not only off the coast o Alaska but also that of California. It is probable that the governmen had no intention of tolerating ill treatment of the natives but is wa very difficult to prevent the unruly *promyshlenniki* from using hars measures.

One other thing must be kept in mind. While the Aleuts and, t some extent, the Eskimos, were in a condition of dependence on th

Reference is to P. Tikhmenev, Istoricheskoe obozrenie obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi Kompanii. 2 V., St. Petersburg, 1861-1863.

Russian American Company, that was not the case with the Indian tribes who fiercely maintained their independence. The most truculent of these — the Tlingit, or the Kolosh as the Russians called them — had captured and destroyed the Russian post at Sitka in 1800. Their relations with the Russians appear to have remained little better than an armed truce after Sitka was recaptured in 1804. On the sale of Alaska to the United States, it was provided in the treaty of cession that the whole native population — Eskimos, Aleuts and Indians, should retain the same rights as they had enjoyed under the Russians.

This provision had an interesting aftermath of which I learned one summer when I was working in the Library of Congress. Some dispute having arisen between the Tlingit and their white neighbors, the former had invoked the above provision and the delegate from Alaska was requested to refer the matter to the Justice Department. As a result the Law Department of the Library was instructed to search the documents — in this case the charter of 1841 — to ascertain exactly what the status of the Tlingits had been under Russian occupation.

The end result of the long series of negotiations and intrigue are of course embodied in the *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov* (Complete Collection of Laws). The work of Shelekhov in the course of which he established an advanced base on the island of Kodiak is contained in his own account, one of the rarest and most prized bits of Alaskan literature. The various events and negotiations that finally led up to the establishment of Shelekhov's monopoly are to be found in a mass of photostatic material brought back by Frank Golder and now in the library of the University of Washington in Seattle. I have used two volumes only of this and it is quite probable that much information on Russian activity in the late eighteenth century is to be found in these. Apparently but slight use has been made of this material.

The arrival of Baranov in 1791 at the Three Saints' post in Kodiak is important in the history of Alaska. At first he was merely the factor of a fur-trading post, trading with the natives and struggling to hold his own against rival companies. It was not till the formation of the Russian American Company in 1799 under the Emperor Paul that Baranov became something more than a mere fur-trader and assumed a political role with wide responsibilities. One of his first acts was to establish a new post in the Alexander Archipelago on or near the site of modern Sitka and here he reigned supreme for almost twenty years.

There is ample material on Baranov's activity from the non-Russian trading ships that put into Sitka and with whom Baranov dealt. A life of Baranov was written by Khlyebnikov, containing a goodly amount

of material. There is also some manuscript material on Baranov at th University of California at Berkeley in the Bancroft Library. Howeve the main source in which one would expect to find records of his activit during the early years of the Russian American Company would be th records of the company itself. But for some unaccountable reason th records of the company's headquarters in St. Petersburg have disappeared Mr. Pierce speaks of their having been destroyed which may be the cas However, when I was in Moscow there was wide speculation as to the fat that had overtaken them. The story then was that when the capital wa transferred from St. Petersburg to Moscow in 1918 there had been grea confusion. Many boxes were left on the freight platforms of the railwa awaiting transport, exposed to the weather, to depredations by the pop ulation. In the panic consequent on the threat of the German advanc on St. Petersburg, some were put on trains and shipped east to Vologd or some other place and were eventually lost.

There remain the Archives of the Sitka station which (accordin to the Purchase Treaty) were turned over to the United States and d posited with the Department of State. Within fairly recent times the found their way into the National Archives and the latter institutio has had them reproduced on microfilm. In that form they are availabl to any library wishing to purchase them. Unfortunately the records fo the years 1801 to 1817 are extremely scanty, leading to the conjectur that when Baranov left Sitka in 1818 he took the records with him since he died and was buried at sea, there was no one to look after th documents when the ship arrived at St. Petersburg and they too di appeared. Otherwise the records of the Sitka post down to 1867 ar complete together with the logs of some of the company ships.

We are not entirely dependent on the Russian archives for al that happened during the regime of the Russian American Company In 1812 the Russian government issued an *ukaz* designed to exclude al non-Russians from participating in the exploitation of the fur-trade i Alaskan waters, a blow, if not rebutted, to the claims of Britain and th United States. This made it imperative that the disagreement betwee Russia and the other interested powers be settled by diplomacy. Th result was the treaties of 1824-1825 between Britain and the Unite States on the one hand, and Russia on the other. The records of thes negotiations were deposited in the archives of both countries an brought out and published at the time of the Bering Sea controversy i 1892 and the Alaska Boundary Tribunal in 1903. These documents ar readily available in printed form.

The other occasion for which we can draw on non-Russian source was the crisis that occured in 1834 when the representative of the Hud

son's Bay Co., Peter Skene Ogden, was debarred by the Russians from entering the Stikine River and crossing the so-called *lisiere* to reach British territory beyond. This was held by the British to be a violation of Britain's treaty with Russia in 1825 and threatened an international crisis. However, the Emperor Nicholas intervened and insisted that the Russian American Co. settle the dispute amicably. The result was that the latter company entered in 1839 an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Co. by which they leased the *lisiere* or panhandle to the latter for a stipulated yearly rental. A further condition of the agreement was that the British company should furnish the Russian posts with supplies of food which they could raise at their more southerly posts in what is now Oregon and the Puget Sound area. Since the Russian posts had lived perpetually in the fear of famine, this was a godsend to them. For apart from the fish obtained during the runs of salmon along the coast, they had been dependent on food supplies brought by land from Central or Western Siberia, then by pack train across the mountains to be shipped by sea three or four thousand miles across the Pacific.

These negotiations were recorded in documents by Otto Klotz on a visit to London at the turn of the century and by him published in a book a copy of which is to be found in the Canadian Archives and apparently nowhere else (at any rate, the Library of Congress did not, on my enquiry, have a copy of it). The title is, I believe "Correspondence of the Foreign Office with the Hudson's Bay Company." The lease of the panhandle or *lisiere* was renewed several times up to the sale of Alaska to the United States.

Two things might strike one as odd about these proceedings. Ogden had been in the old roistering days of the Nor'-westers [North West Company] one of the most implacable foes of their London rival. At points where both companies maintained posts, he had terrorized the Hudson's Bay factors and their servants so effectively that when the two companies amalgamated, the Hudson's Bay Company had refused for some years to employ him. Once he had entered his old rival's employ, however, he had used his rare gifts to advance their interests and no difficulty seemed to discourage him. But the Hudson's Bay Co. had no authority over the coastal Indians as they had over those of the interior; moreover, the coastal Indians jealously guarded their trade with the tribes of the interior, which Shakes informed Ogden they proposed to maintain at all costs. Ogden like all in the fur trade had a healthy respect for the Tsimshian Indians and their chief and Ogden was not prepared to try conclusions with them.

Why then was the Hudson's Bay Company successful at St. Petersburg when it had failed at the mouth of the Stikine? Two devel-

opments had occurred to change the mind of the Russian America Company in this matter as well as that of the Russian government. Firs the British company had already tapped the interior trade by a po established on the Liard river; and secondly, the Emperor Nichola needed British support in his feud with Louis Philippe. He therefor stood out for a compromise. A sop to the Russians was that they secure under the agreement, a great supply of the pelts of land animals whic they could not otherwise have obtained.

The sale of Alaska to the U.S. can be said to have been the resul of a long weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of retainin a foothold in America. The Crimean War demonstrated to Russi her inability to defend her eastern insular possessions. The discovery o gold in California in 1849, on the Fraser River in the 1850's and on th Stikine in 1862 changed the situation on the west coast completely wit the influx of population. It made the possibility of conflict with Amer can settlers a likely and menacing prospect for the fur-trading companie But in my estimation the real reason for Russia's divesting herself o her American possessions was the changed situation in China as a resul of the so-called "Opium War" of 1840 and the Treaty of Nanking o 1841. Russia now saw the chance of extending her territory southward a China's expense and, beginning in the 1850's, definite steps were take to do so. At the same time, Russia also began to move the centre of he activities in the Pacific from America to Asia. And, of course, thi is a very burning matter right now between China and the Sovie Union, *viz.*, that Russia took advantage of China's weakness to wres from the latter what up till then had been regarded as Chines possessions. What led me to reach this conclusion was a very mysteriou letter of Bishop Innokentii written in 1852 in reply to a note of censur from the *Ober-Prokuror* of the Holy Synod for his having openl discussed the so-called "Amur secret" obviously a plan for an aggressiv campaign against China to extend Russian holdings southward a China's expense – a policy that would inevitably result in giving up he American possessions. When one contemplates the successive step taken by the Russian American Company and the Orthodox church t transfer their activity in the lands bordering on the North Pacific fron America to the Asiatic mainland, it seems to me a reasonable assump tion that this necessarily involved Russia's divesting herself of he holding in America.

The negotiations leading up to the sale of Alaska, the sale itsel with its terms and their aftermath have to a great extent been mad accessible to the public in the published documents of the Unite States. This, however, has not forestalled endless controversy on secret

alleged to have been revealed concerning it. In the absence of documents reliance has had to be placed on rumours regarding information later disclosed (in confidence) by Seward or some other public figure. A heated controversy begun by the *Literary Digest* in 1903 died down but has periodically erupted particularly in columns of the *New York Times.* The fact that the House of Representatives at first balked at voting the purchase price and was later pursuaded to do so, has perhaps lent some slight plausibility to the suspicion that some of the purchase money may have found its way into pockets of those who had, at first, opposed the bill. But without documents, the historian can place slight confidence on such slight evidence.

Another story gained credence at the time. The arrival of a Russian naval squadron in New York harbour in 1863 just after the battle of Gettysburg, prompted the idea (or prompted some one to bring up the idea), that the Russian ships having arrived at a critical period of the Civil War, the sale of Alaska was but a further gesture of friendship and a pledge of support in a period of international tension. However, I think the historian has a better argument since events occurring at that time in Europe give a much more plausible explanation. There had broken out just before this a Polish revolt. After it had been put down by the Russian army, the Emperor Alexander decided to change the status of Poland, which had been determined by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The country had been hitherto a kingdom attached to Russia only by reason of the fact that the Russian monarch had been King of Poland. It was now officially annexed to Russia and Russian laws and institutions were introduced. Britain and France, however, who had been signatories of the Act of the Congress of Vienna, lodged vehement protests in the Russian capital at this high-handed act undertaken without Russia's even consulting the other signatories. Since in this crisis there was some danger that a European war might break out, the Emperor and his naval advisors decided to get the fleet out of the Baltic where it might be uselessly immobiled in case of war. Accordingly it was dispatched to New York. Russia's Asiatic squadron arrived about the same time in San Francisco, but this was apparently on the initiative of the naval commander himself without even consulting the government. The diplomatic effect of this move, however, was nil.

There are a number of phases of Alaska's history under the Russians to be cleared up that invite the future historian. We have already pointed out that most of the material on the expeditions of Bering has seen the light of day but that the period following Bering is still wrapped in considerable obscurity. The portfolios of Muller deposited

in the archives of the Academy of Sciences, though primarily concerne with Siberia may yield material on the voyages of fur-hunters wh ventured into Alaskan waters. Such records can be further supplemente by accounts of voyages of English, American and Spanish mariners a the turn of the century to give us rather full information on these inte national rivalries. But perhaps a more serious gap in our knowledg concerns Russian penetration of the mainland. Shelekov had at firs established a post in Yakutat Bay, for farming, a location found to b quite unsuitable and abandoned. But, in any event, the interes of the Russian American Co. was primarily in the fur trade and of course, the most valuable fur consisted of the pelts of the sea otte Till the exhaustion of these there was little to tempt them to lool further for a profitable fur-trade. But after Baranov's time, the began to look more and more to the mainland for other resource It will be recalled that Captain Cook missed the mouths of th Yukon and the Kuskokwim with the result that this part of th coast remained unmapped for half a century. While Glazunov an others entered and explored the Yukon delta and the lower rive it was not accurately mapped till this was done by two Russian sea captains, Vasiliev and Kromchenko. Details were filled in by othe naval personnel. The north coast of Alaska was, of course, explored an charted by Parry a British sea-captain and other officers of the Russian American Company.

I might point out at this stage that after the death of Baranov the Company became practically a department of the administration The government decided to install naval personnel as governors t take over the company and manage it. The result was that the com mercial operations of the Company ceased to be a matter of prim concern. Towards the end the state had to foot a deficit of som $200,000 a year if the company was to be kept on its feet.

But the first actual penetration of the valley of the Yukon wa the work of Lieutenant L. A. Zagoskin who in the years 1842-1844 passe over from Unalakleet on the coast to the Yukon river above the delt and began the ascent of the river in *baidars*. This was a type of craf used on the Siberian coast but it was found to be quite unsuitable fo navigating a river. (If you have travelled the Yukon in a small boa you will realize that any kind of craft with a high freeboard is quit unmanageable on a large river where you have to cope with bot wind and current.) However, Zagoskin managed to make his way up th river to somewhere below the mouth of the Tanana, where he turne back. He gives, of course the astronomical readings which indicate tha when he decided to turn back, progress had been slow and painful

Reaching the mouth of the Koyukuk, a river flowing into the Yukon from the north, he made his way up that tributary for a considerable distance. On returning to the main river itself, he passed over a portage to the Kuskokwim, at a point where that river approached within a short distance of the Yukon. He managed in his ascent of the Kuskokwim to trace its course, to a point roughly comparable to those reached in traversing the other rivers. Russian posts had already been established at Russian Mission (Ikogmute) and Nulato. One Russian, Lukin, was rumoured to have reached the Yukon Flats and penetrated as far as Fort Yukon, the post built at the junction of the Yukon and the Porcupine rivers by the Hudson's Bay Co. in 1847. But the company apparently made no attempt to dispute the foothold which the British company had secured in the Upper Yukon.

We are left with no definite record of later penetration of the valley of the Kuskokwim and the southern interior of Alaska. However, it is known that a beginning had been made by the Lebedev-Lastochkin company one of Shelekov's early competitors, without our knowing much about what the Russian American Co. did in its later years. Traces of Russian activity in these regions were found in the Copper River country by Klondike stampeders at the end of the century, but we still await fresh light on this obscure phase of Russian penetration. After the discovery of gold in California, the Russian American Co. (which now had been turned into what was really a department of the government) turned its attention to the search for natural resources and some traces of gold were found. However it was on Birch Creek that the first signs of the placer gold that later led to the great gold rushes, were found by an employee of the Hudson's Bay Co. at Fort Yukon. The Russians, did, however, tap the coal seams and marketed some shipments of coal in San Francisco. Ice, too, apparently from the glaciers, was shipped to that port and for some years found a ready market.

A further possible source of material on the Russian period which has been recently tapped, must not be overlooked. Some years ago the Library of Congress sent a man north to visit the various parishes of the Orthodox Church (many of them, of course now defunct) with a view to examining and, if possible, securing for the Library their early records. After surmounting great difficulties in visiting out-of-the-way places in the Aleutian islands, he returned with an almost incredible amount of material. While the work of sorting and providing some sort of an index of this vast accumulation is still under way, it is safe to say that something can be gleaned that will throw some light on the early period of Alaska history and of the life of the people, both Russian and Aleuts under Russian occupation.

One of the other important gaps to be filled in, I would thir is the relations of the Russian American Co. with the Hudson's B Co. particularly after the agreement of 1839 by which the *lisiere* or pa handle of Alaska was leased to the Hudson's Bay Co. The recen published history of that company by E. E. Rich hardly touches on tl phase of the company's history. While the task of providing a calend of each volume is still not complete, it is a problem of some difficul to locate material for which one is searching. Still it can be done. myself was fortunately able to locate all the documents dealing wi the incident at the mouth of the Stikine when Ogden was turned ba and prevented from ascending the river.

A postscript might be added at this point with regard to tl foothold Russia had established on the California coast at Fort Rc and the neighbouring ranchos. This post which had been occupi in 1812 was effectually cut off from her northern possessions wh she signed the treaties of 1824-1825 with the United States and Brita which rendered it little more than an outpost. One attempt only w made to secure recognition of Russian sovereignty — that by Govern Wrangell in 1836. Henceforth its isolation was all but comple and the treaty of 1839 with the Hudson's Bay Company was an adm sion that Russia had written off its California holdings and, in 184 they were sold to Sutter.

It will be seen from the above examples that there is still muc to be learned of the period of Russian occupation to occupy the atte tion of future historians. The discovery and utilization of fresh materia will, it is to be hoped, enable them to clear up many of the poin that the absence of records has, thus far, left wrapped in obscurity.

AMERICAN
ALASKA

End the song, end the song,
For now the flood goes west, the rushing tide,
The rushing flood of men,
Hundred on hundred, crowding the narrow ships . . .

Exile, rebel, men against fortune, all
Who are driven forth, who seek new life and new hope
. . . they are coming now
To the exile's country, the land beyond the star . . .

A rolling, resistless wave of seeking men,
Settling and planting, creeping along the coast,
Pushing up river-valleys to the new ground . . .

There was a wind through the nations, and it blew.
Strong, resistless, the wind of the western star,
The wind from the coasts of hope, from the barely-known,
And, under its blowing, Plymouth and Jamestown sink
To the small, old towns, the towns of the oldest graves,
Notable, remembered, but not the same . . .

And the west wind blew in the faces of Dickon's sons
And they looked to the West and searched it with their eyes,
And there was the endless forest and the sharp star.

—Stephen Vincent Benet
Western Star

REFLECTIONS AND REFRACTIONS: ALASKA AND GILDED AGE AMERICA

TED C. HINCKLEY

> You, the citizens of Sitka, are the pioneers, the advanced guard of the population of Alaska, and you naturally ask, when, from whence, and how soon, reinforcements shall come; and what are the signs and guarantees of their coming? The guarantees and signs of their coming to Alaska are found in the resources of the Territory, and in the condition of society in the other parts of the world. [1]

The July 30, 1869 address of Secretary William Seward expressed the platitudes expected of a Washington, D.C. official visiting "out West." Indeed, some members of his Sitka audience may have recalled hearing similar sentiments expressed on earlier frontiers. The neophyte territory, Seward counselled, would have to wait until its resources were appreciated by the older settled portions of the nation. Yet the boldly imaginative expansionist had gone much further. "The guarantees [of Alaska's future]," he declared, also depended "on the condition of society in other parts of the world." Alaska was not merely another western accretion but a Great Land, one so huge, so unorthodox that unlike its Far West sister territories, its evolution to statehood would ultimately, and in no small measure, be determined by global factors.

Those of you who recall how World War II and its aftermath, the Cold War, transformed parts of Alaska are keenly conscious of the visionary validity in Seward's 1869 remarks. For decades few of his countrymen, either in or out of Alaska, appreciated how really unique was the Far North purchase. Historian Walter LaFeber has recently reminded us that by Alaska's annexation America's non-contiguous, "New empire

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had started to form." [2] The major implications of Alaska's singular role can be seen by tracing its relationship with the United States from 1867 to 1900. First let us examine these decades as a reflection of the traditional westward movement. Once that has been done, Alaska's distinctive late 19th century historical refractions will prove more comprehensible.

In 1867-68 General Jefferson C. Davis' command, accompanied by a motley group of frontier adventurers, descended upon Sitka. The event approximates episodes at a dozen Western locales from Deadwood to Tulsa. The soldiers quickly created a military cantonment, while the civilian boomers rushed about driving proprietary stakes into the ground, erecting tap rooms and billard halls. With all the bawdy overtones, the newcomers were also confident civilizers. An *Alta California* correspondent who had journeyed north with them reported on an evening shipboard sing-a-long.

> [The] manly chorus . . . smote the silence with "The Yankees are Coming, harrah! harrah!" That song was a prophecy and a promise. It was a prelude to the music that shall fill those wastes sublime; the music of the busy world, the hum of the wheel, the scream of the whistle, the clangor of hammers, the ring of the anvil, and the thousand voices of labor. No more shall those quiet waters flow unfettered to the sea; their rising and falling tides shall bear up the thousand keels of commerce and see the going forth of the untiring Yankee . . . [who shall] crown the triumphs of free labor by planting the mills, the church and the school amidst Arctic snows and establishing liberty and law upon lands that stretch nigh to the shores of Ancient Asia. [3]

It was a heady brew. Albeit, the journalist voiced an optimism that had in fact helped to subdue a continent. Now it was going to "stretch nigh to the shores of Ancient Asia."

By hindsight we can only shake our heads. What folly to sing about Alaska in the singular. When Frederick Jackson Turner wrote that the states were artificial in their relation to the national government and what genuinely counted were the sections, what he called "potential nations," he may have been thinking of Alaska. [4]

With typical Gilded Age intoxication, the 1867-68 pioneers chose to forget that Americans were already preoccupied with Reconstruction, and an incredible industrialization and the filling up of the still unoccupied sod house frontier. For all its Colonel Sellers-like hucksterism, the Sitka nucleus failed. By 1873 the city council was defunct, and four years

later even the Army had departed. Speculators' dreams of matchin Colorado or California must wait. After all, wrote the perspicacious edito Samuel Bowles in 1869, Alaska "alarms the love of comfort."[5] It "promises of pleasure or profit are not yet sure enough to overcom the hardships of travel . . ." Unlike the timely Louisiana Purchase an the Mexican Cession, Alaska had entered the national family before he treasures were either well understood or eagerly desired.[6]

For all of Alaska's snail-like population growth, its late 19t century Yankee settlements reflected much of the aggressiveness and sc journer mentality of the traditional trapper-miner West.The scalped deforested terrain which surrounded Juneau's famous Treadwell Minin organization duplicated the bleak, exploited appearance of Virgini City and Helena. Not long after the prospector had penetrated the Yuko Valley, according to Mrs. Frederick Schwatka, the supply of fresh gam fell off.[7] Emil Teichman had bemoaned the American proclivity fo carrying guns at early Sitka. Twenty years later a Kuskokwim missionar noted, "The natives say 'nearly all the white men we see are rough an carry revolvers as though we were wild animals to be afraid of. Wh don't you first Christianize those of your own kind, and then thei example would help us to do right'."[8]

Trappers and gold-seekers did frequently exhibit acts of dee humanity and employed such reasonable institutions as the miners' law however, only a few of this large segment of the District population wer seriously interested in putting down permanent socio-economic root Sometimes even pioneer Alaska's more stable, small-town business ele ment was in a state of suspended flight. The *Oregonian* told how Juneau' respected merchant, Mr. R. Goldstein, after twenty-four years of freedon had finally been ferreted out by Mrs. Goldstein and their [sic?] si children.[9] And while it is probably true that far more Klondikers equip ped themselves with Bibles than they ever did six-guns, Alaska's villain and vigilantes presented essentially the same old Western melodrama if in a different theater. Instead of robbing gold from the local stage the steamer *Roanoke* was hit.[10] Likewise when an angered group o Yukon vigilantes wanted to hunt down an Indian murderer, instea of commandeering the best horseflesh, they seized the local river steamer Certainly Juneau's tourists got an eyeful! Prospector D. A. Murph recalled how a properly convicted Indian was strung up as "the monthl steamer came in," and later as the *Idaho* pulled away from the wharf another native was hanged.[11]

Indeed, the attitude of the Yankee Alaskan toward the non-whit was precisely what it was to the south. The familiar designation o "buck," "squaw" and "papoose" were applied to Alaska's natives. Wher

ever indigenes' rights stood in the way of the invader, the former usually gave way. Attempts by government agencies to protect them proved an impossible task. As David Starr Jordan bemoaned, "the lawlessness of the few forces lawlessness on all." [12] Governor A. P. Swineford bragged how he meted out justice by cutting a shaman's hair, and when the old man proved obstinate, "I sent for a barber and had his head shaved as smooth as a billard ball. We got red paint after that and painted him a nice wig." [13] It is too easy to write off Swineford as a confirmed racist, which he was, for the Governor only exaggerated his countrymen's arrogance. Referring to some 1894 Indian frictions in Alaska, a New York newspaper lamented, "The great branch of the white race is distinctively popular in its internal governmental development, but it is as distinctively imperialistic in its attitude toward all other races." [14]

Regrettably it was so. When Juneau's Treadwell firm imported Chinese labor, local white miners matched the conduct of their peers at Rock Springs, Denver, and too many other Western centers. The orientals were forcefully evicted. By the end of the century white Alaskans had even begun to react to the threatened "Yellow Peril." How seriously concerned the Klondike miners really were at the press accounts of possible piracy by high-binders from "the Chinese slums of San Francisco" is problematical. [15] However, there was no doubt that Americans in and "outside" Alaska harbored imperialistic notions about Canada. In 1871 when Her Majesty's government annexed the Crown Colony of British Columbia, it had proved something of a shock; thereafter the dream of a full *anschluss* with our northern neighbor faded. [16] During the 1890's as Americans caught the disease "imperialitus," Alaskans also succumbed to the vanity of owning other people. The prominent Sitkan John G. Brady was more bearish than most. "Some of us in Alaska," he declared in 1896, "who have been willing to see Cuba and Canada and the Sandwich Islands brought under the American flag are beginning to doubt the ability or genius of our government to manage or control detached portions of territory." [17]

Brady's reservations were the voice of experience. But the Far North frontier, like the Far West, was rarely circumspect, particularly when it came to expressions of nationalistic fervor. Certainly if excessive nationalism is a mainspring of imperialism, then Alaska's press was imperialistic. At the conclusion of the "Splendid Little War," *The Alaskan* commented on the "wily and treacherous" Filipinos and the "brave and energetic" Americans while it gloated over the resultant commercial triumphs. "When it comes to business," boasted *The Alaskan*, "Uncle Sam beats them all, just as he can lick them all in the fighting line." [18] Actually Americans were not so sinister as their jingoism sometimes

made them appear. "Empire," William Seward had observed, "move far more rapidly in modern than it did in ancient times." [19] Correct but the failure of the Sitka boom demonstrated how reluctant American were to immigrate to noncontiguous regions.

If Billy Yank was guilty of anything it was hoopala. The fantasti acceleration of every phase of American life during the Gilded Age whether it was in communications, city construction or the volume o immigration, invested the land's articulate forces with a windy con fidence that a more pessimistic age can hardly accept. Ofttimes th bombast reached rank absurdity. The Alaska promoter Miner Bruce possibly with Anchorage's climate in mind, featured as the frontispiec picture for his book on Alaska, a Polynesian girl. The fact that she i hugging a palm tree did not dissuade him, or was it the publisher, fron labeling the photograph "An Alaskan Indian Girl." [20]

Nothing was so unpopular as someone who spoke dour reality Maybe this helps explain why Sheldon Jackson did not receive th contemporary recognition which he so well deserved. In any case, wha was popular was boosterism. When the well-known Southwesterne John P. Clum moved to Alaska he wisely identified his new land with notorious Tombstone, Arizona. Clum vaunted the future prospects o the Skagway "metropolis." Other Alaskans, also no doubt largely chee chakos, proposed that the entire Yukon Valley be designed into a new territory named Lincoln. This mid-90's extravaganza was sure to succeed for:

> The influx of population into these gold fields is so great that the residents of the interior of the present Alaska, and all who have investments there, are unanimous in their demands for such recognition from the Government . . . There are mines of gold, copper, coal, iron, silver and lead within the proposed Territory of Lincoln and to these must be added the recently rich oil fields. Organization will immediately follow the territorial creation, and it is likely 'the delegate from Lincoln' will soon be recognized in Congress. [21]

The golden years of America's small town were passing, bu not to acclaim the virtues and thrilling prospects of one's hometown was shameful. *The Alaskan* bragged that Sitka was "The most charming town in Alaska for a residence . . . It also has the best climate, th prettiest residences and churches, the smallest number of saloons an less vice and crime than any other place in the territory." The *Juneau Mining Record* replied, "And we might add less population." To which

The Alaskan snapped back, "Yes and we should have included . . . less typhoid fever, and other contagious diseases which are prevalent in some of our larger northern cities, . . . caused from foul sewers, poor drinking water and dirty streets and back yards." [22]

Almost always local politics generated far more heat than did the national presidential contests. In typical Western fashion, politics was extremely personalized, frequently vituperative, yes, even physically dangerous. After one editor of Sitka's *Alaskan* had been given what the San Francisco *Chronicle* described as a "tremendous thrashing," his replacement suffered the ignominy of being "unmercifully" beaten with a bullwhip by an irate woman. [23] Occasionally ridiculous charges were mushroomed into a serious indictment. In an age when the civil service merry-go-round dumped off many of its passengers every four years, public employees had to be careful. All Lieutenant McLean wanted to do was set up a croquet court, "Where ," as the *Daily Standard* pleaded, "instead of devoting his time to whiskey-drinking and gambling he proposed to take a little innocent recreation." But after an unfriendly fellow Sitkan and civil servant got through, McLean was recalled. [24] And whenever one editor took out after another, things really warmed up. Listen to the purple prose which the manager of the *Alaska Herald* laid across the back of his competitor.

> With a lecherous instinct born of the lowest infamy, and in disregard of all public propriety and decency, he has pursued men with his vicious, dirty pen, nagging them, misrepresenting them, and grossly libeling them, not for any straw they have ever laid in his way, but merely to gratify an insatiable lust of his base born soul, a mind bereft of every principle of honor, every sense of shame, every attribute of manhood. For three long years now this inhuman ghoul has been busy at his selfish work feeding upon the character of men, and in one instance at least has so succeeded in terrorizing a government official in high standing . . . as to draw . . . "blood money" from him before he would let go. [25]

Understandably District officials soon developed a thick skin.

No different from the other Western territories, Alaska was from the very beginning granted a great deal of administrative freedom. What Professor Earl Pomeroy has written about the Far West territories applies to their northern District sister. "The general principle was that territorial authorities should be left to work out practical details and make all possible use of local resources." [26] Alaska's frontier

politician confronted more ponderous problems than those found in most territories. They frequently became very peevish and censorious because of what they felt was glaring inconsideration from Washington, D.C. Damning Congressional apathy was a venerable Western habit. But Washington was a long way from Sitka. More immediate scapegoats had to be found. The author has yet to find a significant Alaska public official in the years from 1867 to 1900 who was not at one time damned as a "contemptible blackmailer," a fugitive who "left his wife dying in California," an agnostic who "rail[s] against the sabbath" — the expletives were as infinite as man's imagination in a free society. [27]

The result of all this still lingers: pioneer Alaska was, according to historian Henry W. Clark, placed under a "reign of lawlessness and corruption that we [the Federal Government] encouraged." [28] This is balderdash. Considering her size and the room for lawbreaking to take place, Alaska may have suffered less "lawlessness and corruption" than her western brethren to the south. To be sure, Alaska had dishonest officials. Probably the most sensational figure, at least before the rascality of Judge Arthur H. Noyes at Nome, was Edward J. Dawne. [29] In July of 1885 Dawne was appointed by President Grover Cleveland to the post of United States Judge for the District of Alaska. Portland's *Weekly Standard* confidently reported "He will make a good officer." The *Weekly Argus* was not so sure. A political adversary, aware that Dawne had dipped into preaching, medicine and business, referred to him as "a doctor without a diploma, a preacher without a congregation and a money lender without a cent." Judge Dawne soon remedied the latter deficiency. After bilking gullible citizens from Salem to Sitka of an estimated $15,000 to $30,000, he made an abrupt retirement, deserted his wife and vanished. [30]

Dawne, or "Thookeydeeds" as he had been known in Oregon for his fatal public mispronunciation of Thucydides, was in one sense typical of pioneer Alaska. As Dr. Jeannette P. Nichols succinctly reminds us, Alaska was a "political preserve for the payment of small debts owed by big politicians to little ones." [31] However, this may be said about most of the Western territories in the late 19th century. If Alaska's officialdom was not always exemplary, neither was it riven with corruption. These public servants reflected the national situation. Professor Ari Hoogenboom believes that in 1875 even the "civil service reform movement reached its nadir." [32] The usual Western judicial system, in the opinion of historian Pomeroy, "was one of the weakest parts of the territorial institution . . . territorial judges were selected with no more deference to local feeling than territorial governors." Why was it tolerable? "Because it fitted loosely though badly, and because

the prospect of early statehood lay always before westerner and easterner alike." [33]

The District penchant for vile name calling and shouting corruption has magnified the image of an unsavory civil administration. In a vain effort to besmirch the powerful missionary-lobbyist, Sheldon Jackson, two Governors even resorted to trumped up Grand Jury charges. For his part Jackson was not adverse to going directly to the President of the United States with his own inflamatory indictments. [34] The truth is more prosaic. Between 1884 when the first governor was appointed and 1906, Alaska had had five heads who were honest and reasonably industrious. Only one knew nothing about Alaska, three had lived there as prior residents; and two of these, Swineford and Brady, became experts on District affairs. Notwithstanding this record, each of the five governors left office under a cloud. The frontier historian Frederic Paxson doubted that any "American ever made a reputation founded upon his knowledge of territorial affairs and his success in administering them." [35] If this is so, part of the reason was the frontier's flagrantly abusive partisanship.

Professor Pomeroy has written that the American pioneer did not always wait "for what was legal and safe." He impetuously pushed out of the settled regions and made ceaseless demands on the Federal Government. Concurrently, according to historian Thomas D. Clark, frontiersmen

> developed a remarkably self-pitying attitude toward themselves because of their treatment by the remainder of the country. Isolation blinded them to general national conditions; they had only limited intercourse with people of other sections, and they were dependent upon their own slender intellectual and political resources in the solution of their everyday problems. [36]

These Western characteristics were blantantly evident in Alaska.

Recently the highly perceptive Juneau historian Robert De Armond has reminded us of the relatively convenient accessibility of Southeastern Alaska to the "outside." [37] But neither a monthly nor a daily steamer could ever match the communication-transportation regularity of the West's ubiquitous locomotive. And for Alaskans "to the westward" the solitude was sometimes unendurable. One Point Barrow doctor reportedly went "from bad to worse . . . gambler, whoremonger and sluggard." [38] Reports of mental break downs in the vast interior were not uncommon.

The Great Land's immensity not only confounded District politicians but magnified the West's sanctimonious self-pity. The result was that Alaska's geo-political handicaps were thus too often diagnosed as administrative cancer. Commander Robley D. Evans fulminated, "The whole condition of Alaska so far as the execution of the law is concerned, is a disgrace to our Government, and I shall so report; but it will not do any good."[39] Commander Evans' frustrating game of hide and seek with the "fur seal pirates" about the enormous Gulf of Alaska may in part account for his wild denunciation. The truth was that by the early nineties Southeastern Alaska had two rather sophisticated towns, a scattered system of churches, courts and schools, in other words, a veneer of law and order. But how typically American — if lawlessness exists anywhere, it must be the fault of governmental system. Those Far North public officials who echoed Evans' rash generalization that in Alaska lawlessness was regent are legion.

Students of the Great Land have thus confused Cassandra for Clio. Listen to the result:

> For seventeen years she was without any form of civil government and almost without law of any kind for thirty-two years . . . and without any effective machinery for the . . . fair trial of offenders against the law; for thirty-nine years without a Delegate in Congress . . .[40]

George W. Spicer's 1927 study was useful, but it cries for qualifications. His exaggerations of inoperative Panhandle legal machinery is bad enough, but the picture which he conveys of a mute Alaska unable to make its needs known in Washington, D.C., is far fetched. The territory had a half-dozen men who assumed the job of unofficial representatives to Congress. Sheldon Jackson was the most prominent, and *he was heard.* Regrettably his penchant for lurid lectures to stateside audiences helped perpetuate the sensational stereotype of a land that knows neither the "law of God or man."[41]

"You are improperly treated," declaimed Washington Territory's governor to a group of Alaskans, "because the people of the country are in great measure ignorant of your condition." Yet was this not the embryo West's traditional burden? And had not a swelling number of eastern missionaries, journalists, tourists, junketing Congressmen, as well as a rising flow of Alaska literature given the American public at least a general idea of what was going on in the Panhandle?[42] Alaskans preferred to believe otherwise.

We see still another reflection of Alaska's historic inferiority complex in the aggressive manner which it damned Uncle Sam as "penny-wise-and-pound-foolish." [43] Indisputably the District did not receive the kind of Federal aid which her present society has come to take for granted. Yet in a relative sense, Congress was probably no more parsimonious with its Alaska largess in the late 19th century than it was across sections of the older contiguous West. In 1892 the veteran Alaskan Ivan Petroff bluntly stated, ". . . until the country gives proof of further development, and until it shall have been decided whether any further revenue will flow from Alaska as an offset to expenditures, we have granted [her] enough . . ." About the same time Sheldon Jackson stated the bald truth when he declared that of Sitka's approximately two hundred white inhabitants, "they are nearly all connected with the government in one way or another. The entire town, Indians and all, live off the federal salary list." In Alaska, as in the Dakotas, government was what Professor Howard Lamar has rightly called "an important paying business." [44]

The indispensable pioneer cornerstone which the Alaskan frontier lacked was a burgeoning population. In this respect Alaska did not mirror the contemporary West nor the nation at large. In 1870, for example, Dakota Territory had 14,181 people. Twenty years later the Dakotas boasted a population of over half a million. Nebraska rose from 122,993 citizens in 1870 to top a million by 1890. In the latter year Alaska confessed to a total of 4,198 resident whites. [45] And although the 1890's mining activities in the Yukon Valley, Klondike and Nome regions abetted her growth, nothing approaching the famous California or even Colorado booms ever materialized.

From this critical deficiency everything else suffered. And because it was basically a problem that could not be remedied by Alaskans, they blamed their government, lack of information, inadequate land survey (when had the lack of a prior survey really blocked frontiersmen?), and a long list of complaints, some of which were contradictory. [46] Territorial ballyhoo made the glacier-like population advance doubly humiliating. In 1878 S. Hall Young had exuberantly predicted Wrangell's "future is assured and its rapid growth is certain . . ." Ten years later he gladly retreated to Long Beach, California, as weeds thrived along Wrangell's main street. [47]

How ironic that despite her woes, both real and fancied, Alaska from 1867 to 1900 enjoyed considerable socio-economic progress. As already noted, it was confined largely to the Panhandle. Like the unrolling of the historic American frontier, Alaska was not going to be subdued in a generation, nor in a century. Five years after the purchase, William H.

Dall, writing in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* raised the question, "Is Alaska a Paying Investment?" His reply was a well-researched yes. [48] By the nineties, and despite her minuscle population, Alaska's mining and fish canning industries were famous. Indeed, Juneau's Treadwell Mine had become a prime tourist attraction. Tourism and other money producers, such as timber and internal trade, had at least been tapped. Alaska business, like much of the West's, had been financed from the "outside", it also reflected the pattern of Gilded Age business consolidation. For example, in 1893, a three million dollar deal fused twenty-three independent canneries and gave birth to the Alaska Packing Association. Writing at the century's end, David Starr Jordan believed that except for mining, four great companies controlled Alaska's commercial interests. [49]

So much for the more obvious reflections and refractions which Alaska inherited. Before concluding, it is necessary to recall two deeper historic shifts which further confused Alaska's role in the Union. Historians have reminded us that late 19th century America was a period that suffered from harsh cultural changes. The agrarian way of life was rudely shouldered aside by an urban, industrial society. As historian Robert H. Wiebe has written, this was an age when

> countless citizens in towns and cities across the land sensed that something fundamental was happening to their lives, something they had not willed and did not want, and they responded by striking out at whatever enemies their view of the world allowed them to see. They fought, in other words, to preserve the society that had given their lives meaning. But it had already slipped beyond their grasp. [50]

This is surely germane in Alaska where one governor after another reviewed the benefits of the traditional, small, farm-type community. Unfortunately, Southeastern Alaska, as the San Francisco *Chronicle* reminded its readers, was "as good for agriculture as is the tiled floor of the Palace Hotel." The monopoly power of the Alaska Commercial Company might be disturbing, but big business, with all of its ramifications, was the wave of the future. [51] In time technological might would transform the Great Land, but in 1900, this was only dimly appreciated.

What was seen in 1900 was the New Empire. "Economic expansion and political involvement had become so interlinked by 1900," declares Professor LaFeber, that we could no longer escape "world wide political commitments." [52] But international ties notwithstanding, the general

American public would not enthuse over "peculiar situations," as Governor Sheakley described Alaska.[53] A 1901 Government publication reviewed what had happened when we first acquired the vast Northern territory.

> Very many people originally went to Alaska with an eager ambition and strong determination to secure some of the riches . . . discovering great hardships to be endured . . . became disheartened, unhappy, and have spent their time in complaint against people who were more fortunate and against the Government for not providing better for their comfort and protection.[54]

The tepid, late 19th century development of the Great Land foreshadowed America's disinterest in activating the spoils of the Spanish American War. In Alaska, as in the Philippines, it would take the threat of foreign invasion to arouse the interest of the man on the street, and by then almost forty years had passed.

In 1900 Mr. Dooley had longed for "th' good old days befur we became . . . a wurrld power." A book published that same year, one which trumpeted American accomplishments in the century just ended, said nothing about Alaska except to note it as a distance marker giving the extent of the remarkable United States.[55] Sixty-seven years later American power extends from Pole to Pole and covers the seven seas.

What is to be the future of the Forty-Ninth State? Of one thing her citizens can be certain: skyrocketing world population and transportation break throughs will mean that Alaska's greatest handicap, her geographic location, will become a diminishing liability. William Seward had dared predict that Asian and European civilizations would be reunited in the Pacific. Is it being too bold to hope that here in Alaska, America and her Pacific neighbors can meet, and in peace, and while reflecting the best of each culture, provide richer, more luminous refracted values to light the way for a better tomorrow?

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6 In this conjunction see: Donald Marquand Dozer, "Anti-Expansionism during the Johnson Administration, Pacific Historical Review, XII (September, 1943), 255ff.

7 Ecology bids fair to become an entirely independent discipline linking science and the social sciences. Before the Forty-Ninth State is covered with whirling, plastic signs, beer cans, and the other evidence of an advanced society, the opportunities for transitional, ecological studies are exciting to contemplate.

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JEANNETTE PADDOCK NICHOLS, the "First Lady" of the American historical profession, received her Ph.D. from Columbia University and taught for many years at the University of Pennsylvania. She has been chairman of the Graduate Group in Economic History at the University of Pennsylvania and presently is a research associate. A Fulbright lecturer in India and Japan, and lecturer at the University of Birmingham, England, Professor Nichols is a consultant to the U.S. Treasury Department. She is the author of Alaska During Its First Half Century Under the Rule of the United States (reprinted 1963), the classic political history of Alaska during the early American period. Her other works include: Growth of American Democracy (with Roy F. Nichols) (1939), The Republic of the United States (with Roy F. Nichols) (1942), A Short History of American Democracy (with Roy F. Nichols) (1943), Twentieth Century United States (1943), and editor (with James G. Randall) of Democracy in the Middle West (1941).

THE SEARCH FOR A USABLE PAST

A COMMENT

JEANNETTE PADDOCK NICHOLS

We of the staff for this historical conference at Alaska Methodist University are much indebted to the thoughtful and foresighted officials who have made the days here both intellectually stimulating and thoroughly delightful. Therefore, now that we are near the close of our next-to-the-last session, I find myself in a grateful, happy and comradely state of mind. In this condition of beatitude, I am moved to open with a light-hearted comment.

We live, of course, in the computer age, and investigation of it has verified what I noticed through the years. We college professors learn to speak fifty minutes, except when "enthralling" a graduate class, when we speak one-hundred-and-ten minutes. This is a hazardous situation, threatening professors with the loss of their "terminal facilities", unless they adopt devices to curb their enthusiasm for elucidation. In all humility, therefore, I bethought myself to bring from the City of Brotherly Love this travelling alarm clock (which now I show you) to ensure retention of my treasured terminal facilities, which otherwise might weaken in the stimulating atmosphere of Anchorage.

If you of the audience were closer to my reading desk you could each ascertain that I have set this clock to read at the end of a human introductory period of thirty minutes, thus to give me due warning that at that juncture I have but twenty minutes left for making what speakers like to call their "closing remarks". Now, I would commission the possibly astounded Dr. Sherwood to take charge of the clock, so that no bored victim can tamper with it; it should fulfill its bounden duty and ring at the end of thirty minutes from now.

Dr. Jeannette Paddock Nichols has been chairman of the Graduate Group in Economic History at the University of Pennsylvania and presently is a research associate.

(As the speaker handed the timepiece to the chairman of the session, it let out a piercing clangor, to the astonishment of all present, without exception. Making the best of the embarassing situation, the speaker turned to her sympathetic listeners.) All teachers sometimes conclude, at the end of a tiring school day, that they have been talking in their sleep. Surely, you have already heard my introductory remarks. Therefore, I turn to my concluding pages.

"The American Period of Alaskan History" could be taken as embracing an extensive portrayal of experience between 1867 and 1967 — surely too broad a canvass to paint at one session of a conference. Therefore Dr. Hinckley wisely has set limits to his discussion — two limits, one chronological and the other substantive. In chronology, his analysis is limited chiefly to the years between 1867 and 1900, the period embracing what is called "The Gilded Age." In substance, he concerns himself principally with "Reflections" and "Refractions" between Alaska and United States territorial experience in general.

Here Alaska appears in two roles: — first, as reflecting frontier experiences normal in westward expansion, rather than unique as frequently claimed: second, as refracting aspects more peculiar to herself and refraction (the dictionaries remind us) can involve deflection of light from a straight path, in passing obliquely from one medium into another in which its velocity is different and an accurate image cannot emerge. At any rate, Alaska's reflections and refractions became commingled. The correct "image" is of course the primary objective of present day politics, business, education, and government. Therefore, should we not inquire about Alaskan images, particularly those which are inaccurate? Whence come these images and what is their real nature?

Whether discussing reflections or refractions our speaker adopts the role of a pioneer in Alaskan history, as befits his subject. Anyhow, pioneering is natural to vigorous, productive scholars for they, being normal human beings, like to build a reputation on discovery of the unique, craving satisfactions and rewards such as inventors derive from patents. Indeed, scholars once possessed of reputations can retain repute only by maintaining the pioneer spirit. At any rate, Dr. Hinckley, in the reflections sector of his presentation, aims momentarily to build his reputation in reverse; he gently but firmly proceeds to emphasize that many characteristics long ascribed as peculiar to Alaska, were, in fact, not unique.

Alaska became in part a reflection of American territorial experience, he reminds us, because her basic predicament resembled that of other territories — a sparse population in a large area located far from Washington and suffering from laggard government appropriations.

These typical elements are noted as having induced in pioneers impatience, self-pity and, sometimes, mental breakdown. Among the other non-unique aspects of Alaskan territorial experience singled out for special mention to us are: — the boom psychology immediately after acquisition and the boosterism for chosen localities; the imperialistic yearning; the aggressiveness and sojourner-mentality of the trapper-miner West; the racist attitudes toward Indians and Orientals; Washington's habitual dumping of local problems upon territorial appointees; and "flagrantly abusive partisanship."

For long-range, trouble-causing, potential, I would wager that rank partisanship was, and remains, among the front runners in the race for governmental obfuscation. Nor is it an attribute peculiar to territories or to the Gilded Age, although its expression may be more subtle in mid-twentieth-century. Abusive partisanship remains today a prime sport throughout the United States, at least every other year and often in between. Most citizens know this well enough to discount it (if they so choose) while they enjoy it.

Partisanship can be very inclusively defined. It is something much more pervasive than mere loyalty to one party. It colors deeply regionalism and factionalism; in fact the outstanding historical revisionists through a number of years have been erecting their reputations on the very sound foundations of what we might call "miniscule" partisanship. Articles and books abound which clearly prove that loyalty to a specified political party, like loyalty to an economic doctrine, differs in various regions and under the leadership of various individuals. This helps to account for the otherwise unbelievable waste and inefficiency of government, whether royal, democratic or military government. It exposes its naked self in the "shopping" by foreign suppliants among the departments at Washington, in interdepartmental rivalries, in intra-departmental infighting, in flouting of executive orders: — in sum, in the general chaos which characterizes government both in peacetime and wartime. Through that chaos suppliants from Alaska always have had to grope their way, as Senator Gruening and other Alaskan protagonists have reminded us, time and again.

However, we must note that this politico-social pastime is not to be lightly dismissed as a territorial influence, especially when unintentional or deliberate misrepresentation readily recognizable on the local scene, may be interpreted as fact, at a distance. Policy based on such misrepresentation leads to what I term "miscalculated history." In it the annals abound, as any student of Washington reactions to hinterland phenomena well knows. This kind of history forces policy to operate in a distorted sequence, creating, consequently, an ill-founded

reality – the basis for further unfortunate decisions. This sort of self-deception has emerged as an inclusive, over-riding handicap of Alaska throughout the Gilded Age, repeatedly revealing itself. A very interesting study might be made of the effects imposed upon Alaskan problems by abusive partisanship and miscalculated history. It could lead one to ponder the advantages and disadvantages of deliberate deceit and secret diplomacy practiced in her affairs, in both the Gilded Age and later years. I recommend this intriguing exploration to the perceptive Dr. Hinckley.

In his preachment for the much-needed critical re-examination of Alaska's past, our speaker follows his consideration of those reflections by Alaska of the non-unique aspects of territorial experience – with discussion of her refractions, the inaccurate images which have been transmitted to the outside from this particular territory. I note that they sometimes have grown out of the notion that Alaska was not unique; again, that she was. Among the unfortunately inaccurate images based on the assumption of non-uniqueness was that favored by governors who preached that Alaska was an hospitable land for general homesteading. In this they were sadly mistaken in that era; their realization that Alaska's great need was for an access of population blinded them to the fact that she could not readily duplicate conditions which had justified and supported the homesteading traditions of many other pioneer states.

The concept of uniqueness, in its turn, could inspire its own inaccurate images. In this frame is pictured the well-meaning, laborious and costly effort to import a Lapland, reindeer-herding economy for the benefit of Esquimaux who lacked the skills and motivation essential to compensate for the investment. Likewise the disastrous effects upon Indians and Esquimaux of the white man's introduction of liquor-currency inspired the belief that prohibition here was eminently desirable and (long before 1918) the faith that it was enforceable.

I suggest that herein, as in other misconceptions of the uniqueness and non-uniqueness of the area, Alaska sometimes suffered from the sincerity, persistence and vociferousness of well-meaning protagonists, where these attributes were no guarantee of well-rounded understanding of the total situation. Their influence in part of their endeavors could be magnified because they served as something of a foil, as the territory came to be known for its more obvious resources. Clad in their bright garments of righteousness they contrasted with the exploiters clothed in the dark habiliments of competitive cupidity. The welfarious projects could turn out to be a cruel disappointment, but they could not honestly be denounced as nefarious, aggrandizing exploitation.

I suggest that a more inclusively accurate image of the variety which is Alaska could not be refracted as long as the refracting agencies were severely limited as to their experience, information and constructive imaginativeness. Since the location, climate and vastness of the territory frustrated officialdom, complaining was indigenous. Badgered administrators subsisting on a remote island (for the lack of aviation and the Alcan highway long kept Alaska an island) suffered from feelings of inescapable confinement. Where escape is difficult, judgment is likely to be distorted.

All governments (and administrations) are of course fed more reports than they can, or wish to, digest; and anyone who has cooked up a report knows the chagrin ensuing when it is not ingested. But it unfortunately happened that while some valuable reports stuck in pigeonholes some mistaken reports proved influential in inhibiting development. As Dr. Hinckley reminds us, some territorial officials and some missionaries acquired the habit of making various official and unofficial reports which refracted to the disadvantage of Alaska. This type of report exaggerated lawlessness and corruption, minimized advances in the social order and overlooked the contributions made by government funds to the territorial complex. As regards the corruption our speaker reassures us; at least five of the governors were on the whole "honest and reasonably industrious."

The image difficulty was compounded by the fact that economic opportunity was very slow to be envisioned over a broad range by investors. Prior to the Klondike, most wealth-seekers trod the familiar avenues of furs, fish and accessible metal. Lacking vigorous impetus to spend heavily very far afield, they did not delve deeply into the mines of information opened up by reports of the more explorative federal agencies. In other words, while unrealistic policies failed because the foundations for them were absent, realistic development lagged for lack of perceptive program-planning.

As regards such official reports as are inaccurate and intentionally or unintentionally deceptive, I would add that they can strikingly illustrate one of the means by which individuals fabricate history. Fortunately, there is now current among historians the realization that they need to check official documents (once considered sacrosanct) with unofficial sources. This is implicit in Dr. Hinckley's paper as a whole, and this is a particularly valuable service to historians. In his forthcoming biography of Governor Brady we surely may expect to find a sharp acclimatization of Brady pronouncements with various and sundry documents penned by other hands.

In conclusion, I would observe that we are indebted to Dr. Hinckley for aerating our concepts on Alaska. Certainly it is helpful to be reminded that older assumptions need to be questioned, and that hitherto scarce-detected relationships influential in determining the past of this vast State need to be recognized. Surely, Alaska is destined to achieve an importance now unimaginable. Meanwhile, Dr. Hinckley might well occupy some of his time during that interim by making a broader application of his measurements of difference. He might well place historians in his debt by producing a scholarly work covering the wide and important field of "Comparative Territorial Experience in the American West."

Let us do him the honor to consider our own obligation to contribute to verifiable Alaskan history. Each of us can contribute if we continually keep in mind the fact that accurate understanding of Alaska requires preservation of the raw materials of its history. In a long (and misspent?) life spent largely in search of elusive records, I have continually noted two facts of prime historical importance. (1) Most people imagine that only memorabilia left by important, well-known personages are important, when in fact the ordinary minutia of everyday life may determine the acts of the personages and therefore can have significance. (2) Most people fail to go exploring for data concerning experiences within their own families, and fail to galvanize other people to ferret out sources of information available to them.

Therefore, let me leave with you this plea. Ask yourself, "What can I do to build up Alaskan history?" Direct venturesome thoughts to possible locations of sources near and far. Ask questions of elderly persons (often flattered by the notion of importance) and immediately write down very carefully precisely what they think they remember. Make your "pestering" so delightfully stimulating that other persons will imitate your effort and climb on the historical bandwagon. Whatever tune they play, be sure to direct the records toward a public library or historical society commited to preservation against fire, flood and thieves. In Alaska we are fortunate that we do not have the hot, torrid climate in which actual worms devour records with relentless and phenomenal speed. We humans need to become active propagandists for our state's history. Thus, in a better sense, we become a vigorous, humanly purposeful breed of glorified Alaskan bookworms, which substitute for destruction intelligent preservation.

ALASKAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Justin J. Stanton, AMU Archivist and Alcohol historian, puts a question.

Conference members check periodical literature and compare notes.

ALASKAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

GEORGE W. ROGERS

"An Evaluation of Alaska Historical Writing" is the announced purpose of this conference. My assigned topic is Alaskan economic history. The purpose of this paper, therefore, should be an evaluation of Alaskan economic history writing. This seems a simple enough assignment. (1) Look up all the entries in the card index under "Alaska, Economic History", (2) Check off all items with which you are already familiar and glance through the balance, (3) Evaluate. But there were no listings under this classification, although there should have been. Before I engaged on my assignment of evaluating Alaskan economic history writing, therefore, considerable detective work was needed to define and discover my subject. Once embarked upon the formulation of basic questions of identity there logically followed the further basic questions of evaluation, not of the writings, but of the subject itself — why should there be any investment of scholarly energies, if not talent, in the study of economic history or, more specifically, Alaskan economic history? Given the dominant professional concerns and interest of the audience, what relevance has this subject to the teaching of history in Alaskan high schools?

If you are ever to get any work done, you should never ask such questions, particularly at my age. The formulation and tentative answering of these questions took up all the time I could possible allot to the preparation and writing of this paper and left me in a somewhat unsettled state since. Consequently, I never got to the evaluation of the writing, and you will have to accept the fall-out from my personal search for answers to these questions.

The subject could be defined in a crude way by defining each word separately and coming up with something like "economic history is the story of how man satisfied his material wants in the past." But

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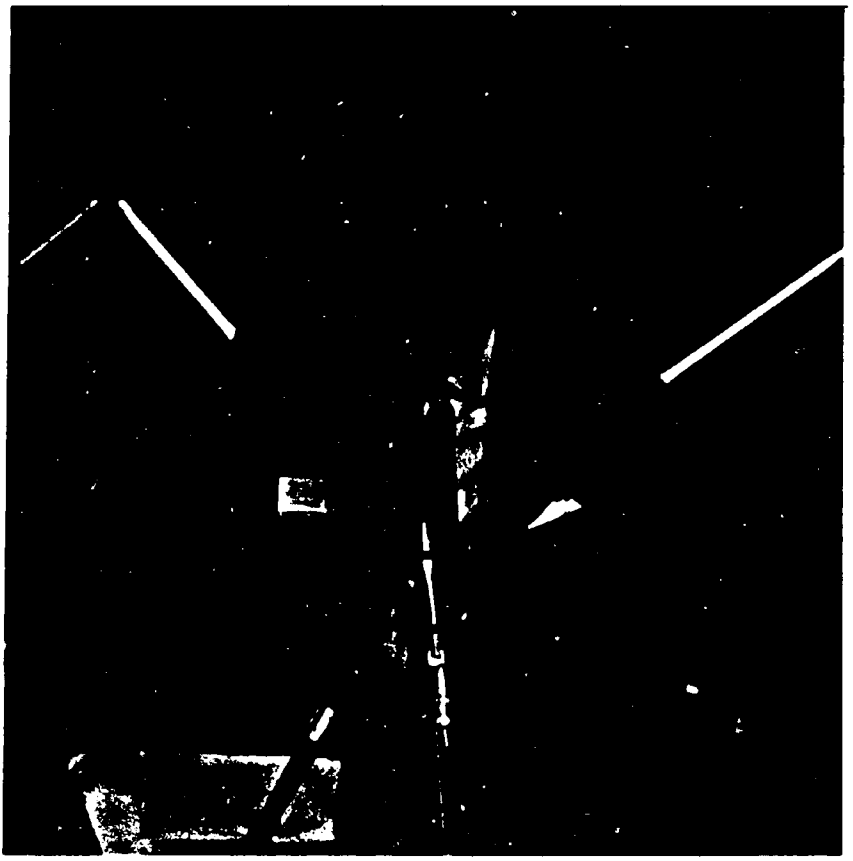

GEORGE W. ROGERS, Professor of Economics, University of Alaska, received his Ph.D. in political economy from Harvard University. He is the author of The Future of Alaska (1962) and Alaska in Transition, The Southeast Region (1960), and is now completing a book on the Bering Sea as an international natural resources region. It is based upon research jointly financed by the University of Alaska, Arctic Institute of North America, and Resources for the Future, Inc. With the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska he has prepared a study on "Alaska-Northwest Canada Development Relationships." He has written many reports, articles, and studies on the economy of Alaska. During the current year he is on research leave at Clare College, Cambridge University.

this can't be accepted as anything more than a weak start. At any rate, because this has to do with history, I turned around and looked back. The vista was not so broad and varied as that exposed by Senator Gruening last night, but it served a purpose.

Returning to my own student days, no mean historical effort in itself, I remembered that the undergraduate major in economics required six units in economic history, either a European or United States type course. I do not have any memory of enthusiasm or even interest in the subject at the time. A short history course for busy economics students who would not get around to taking a real history course is not a very memorable thing. But probably my reaction was due to the fact that the burning issues of the time were far off in another corner. This was still the era of the Great Depression before complete involvement in World War II put our economic system back on its feet. As students in the late 1930's we were preoccupied with the present breakdown and the threat of future continuing stagnation of the economy and the urgency of shifting our discipline from its classical and moribund concern with long-run equilibrium analysis to a more immediate and vital concern with the diagnosis of the contemporary ills of an unstable economic system and prescriptions for their cure.

How had the courses fared since my student days? A 1965-66 college catalogue discarded in my office by my daughter still listed two familiar economic history courses, European and United States, but instead of six units each they were now only three. The course descriptions indicated that surgery had been applied by lopping off anything before the end of the Middle Ages in one and before the Civil War in another. But something had been added. Each course now carried a prerequisite in the form of a course from the Department of History, History of Western Civilization or United States History. From my remembrance of the very scrawny state of its existence of a few decades ago, the subject courses seemed on the point of slipping entirely from the scene into the maw of History Proper.

What of the writings on the subject since my earlier contacts? The latest issue (March 1967) of *The Journal of Economic Abstracts* included two journals of economic history, one at the University of California at Berkeley and another at the University of Texas, and listed the contents of recent issues together with brief abstracts. Almost without change there had survived titles from my youth — The Management of a 16th Century Ironworks; The Population of Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636-1736; Production for the Market on a Small 14th Century Estate; and so on. In the combined contents of both journals, only one article

promised to rise above the specific and trivial – "Williamson, H. P., Business History and Economic History." The abstract in its entirety read:

> "The first objective of this paper is to outline the circumstances that lead to the development of business history as a special field of study in the United States. The second is to indicate how this development adversely affected the relationships between business historians and economic historians. The third is to suggest the extent to which scholars in both fields have interest in the same subject area. *Jour. Econ. Hist.* Dec., 1966, 26 (4) English." [1]

This indicated that there still might be some life in the ruins, at least enough individuals left to find their relationship "adversely affected" by developments. But can a house divided against itself long stand?

This impressionistic approach to discovering my subject was not promising, but before jumping to premature conclusions an attempt at "quantitive research" was needed. Fortunately, this was met by an article on trends in economic writing in the May 1966 issue of *The American Economic Review*. [2] The source for most of the statistical analysis in the article was (the six volumes of) the *Index to Economic Journals* extending from 1886 through 1963, a sufficient time for developing trends and even cycles. The subjects of professional papers listed in the *Index* were classified into 23 categories one of which, fortunately, was "Category 5, Economic History." The volume of writings in this category accounted for about 1.5% of the total over the entire period never going outside a range bounded by 1.2% on the low and 1.6% on the high side, and in terms of output it ranked from number 22 to 19 in the total list of categories. The classification of the members of the American Economic Association in terms of sixteen subject-matter categories, one of which was economic history, indicated that only 2.5% of the membership had designated this area as their field. Only two other categories reported a smaller share.[3] In quantitative terms (i.e. volume of scholarly output and number of economists engaged in its pursuit) economic history appeared to be of minor importance.

All of this left me in dispair, but before I could give notice to resign from the Conference, my evaluation was dramatically reserved by a 1963 article by Professor Douglass C. North of the University of Washington describing the "new Economic history." It also led me to a startling discovery. But first, to quote Professor North.

"A revolution is taking place in economic history in the United States. It is being initiated by a new generation of economic historians who are both skeptical of traditional interpretations of U.S. economic history and convinced that a new economic history must be firmly grounded in sound statistical data. Even a cursory examination of accepted 'truths' of U.S. economic history suggests that many of them are inconsistent with elementary economic analysis and have never been subjected to – and would not survive – testing with statistical data." The reconstruction of U.S. economic history required first of all that the "new men" saturate themselves in the "wealth of material available in the form of early price data, official documents of many kinds, local historical materials, and state statistics." Comprehensiveness and breadth of investigation were the first essentials for, "While any single time series may be subject to a wide range of error, the gradual accretion of many independent series lends greater confidence in our ability to arrive at careful judgments." The second essential was an openmindedness in "development of the theoretical hypotheses." A major result claimed for the revolution was "to disabuse the economic historian of any simple ready-made explanation of U.S. economic growth, and to encourage more intensive investigation of the varying sources of changing productivity in the economy." Beyond this North saw the "new economic history" not as a sterile study of the past for its own sake, but as holding promise of revitalizing whole areas of the general discipline of economics. "The economist can expect that the quantitative research and analysis of the economic historian will provide him both with improved data to test hypotheses and with a cumulating number of analytical insights into the process of past economic change which are the essential prerequisite to evolving sound theoretical propositions about long-run economic development." [4]

This was mighty heady stuff after the thin fare I had come upon so far, but the words also carried the further excitement of a shock of recognition. Writing in 1959, four years before the appearance of North's comments, I had expressed similar sentiments in the opening chapter of my *Alaska in Transition* describing my own approach and methods.

"To present a clear and balanced picture of a region or to treat any regional problem in its proper perspective, the investigator must first somehow get the general 'feel' of the subject region. To properly grasp the unity and wholenesss of his subject, the investigator must steep himself in the background of the region until it becomes a natural part of his own surroundings and experience. The sense of 'experience' of the over-all background should then reduce anything set against it to its right proportions. The conduct of a regional study thus becomes not a

matter of collecting a mass of details and from this collection piecing together a larger whole, [in accordance with a ready made model], but a process of elimination of all details which are already there except those which naturally force their way in and are strategic to the purposes being served.

"This is not an interdisciplinary approach (at least at the outset). . . . Nor is it intended as a case study in the application of some recent and explorative new discipline such as regional science or human ecology . . . The task of dealing with an entity as complex as a region requires a broader and more flexible initial approach. By combining something of the spirit of scientific open-mindedness with a subjective and impressionistic approach acquired directly from experience of the subject region itself, it should be possible to make a more pertinent selection of the strategic variables than would be possible through an approach which to a large extent predetermines this." [5]

My Alaskan research and writing were undertaken as a regional economist focusing upon the general study of economic phenomena and the underlying causative or conditioning factors as they might be discovered *geographically*. I was concerned with the time-dimension, of course, because the subject of economics must be considered in dynamic, as well as static terms, to be meaningful. But my initial preoccupation was not with the past, the popular conception of the special domain of history, but with the present and the future as the title of my two books declare.

The preparation for this Conference, however, has given rise to the growing suspicion that I am after all really an economic historian. Not only an economic historian but, in Professor North's designation, a *new* economic historian! Consider first that my work is the result of applying the two essential qualities of North's revolution. My judgments as to what is going on in Alaska and the probable shape of its future were derived from the type of submersion in historical detail (for anything that is recorded must be history) called for and my analysis upon the fashioning of what this preparation suggested as more appropriate tools than those which come ready-made. Consider further that elsewhere in this book and in my other works I pledge allegiance to the credo of the revolution in striving through my work to gain basic analytical insights into the workings of economic development and change in general.

Pursuing Professor North's career through my dusty piles of back issues of the *Review* I found we were following a roughly parallel course, he taking the high road of the United States as the geographic unit of study and I, more modestly, the low road of the Territory, later, State

of Alaska. In 1966, Prentice-Hall published his *Growth and Welfare in the American Past — A New Economic History*. A copy of the book is not yet in my hands, but a 1967 review article concluded that it "will provide a guide to the direction of quantitative economic history and the tools it employs, as well as to some of its accomplishments and the frontiers it has opened up." There was the usual registration of disappointments we expect from reviews in professional journals, but in this case the reviewer (whose name appeared in the Association directory under 2. Economic history) bore down heavily upon Professor North in his role as critic of the established school. "While some complaints have merit, others have been unfair and irrelevant. To help resolve at least some of these doubts, it would seem all the more imperative for new economic historians to build analytical frameworks upon which the elements of their work can be grafted, and given meaning . . . Disappointment is thus compounded when his latest book suffers from a lack of a clear theoretical structure." [6]

Professor North and I appeared to be following similar paths in the development of our work, but there now appears to be two important differences in the light of this review. The first, that as I was not conscious of being a new economic historian I had not indulged in attacks upon the establishment. I had forgotten it existed until this Conference. Secondly, in my second book published in 1962, I had recognized the need for "analytical frameworks" upon which the elements of my work could be "grafted and given meaning." In the introductory chapter the note on approach given in the first book was enlarged upon and described in "an analytical approach" which in turn was fully developed as Part I, a major part of the book, from the Alaskan materials. This was used to give meaning to what followed, not only in this book but in almost everything I have done since. [7] This should definitely qualify me, not merely as a new economic historian, but as a member of the *avant guard.*

I have now done with my strawman, "economic history", and exchanged him for the flesh and blood variety. But before departing the subject, I must confess to you that this distinction was not being taken very seriously by me. You do not make straw men of academic disciplines even if you do find straw men engaged in them. Nor do I rate the "revolution" as even of the bloodless variety. The reviewer of Professor North's book was too much of a gentleman (of the old school) to point out that what North considered to be revolution was nothing of the sort. There have always been economists who were generally known as belonging to a "historical school" because of their pursuit of the historical

method in their work (i.e., the induction of principles from facts as derived from statistical and non-statistical historical data). There have always been empirical research economists who seek "truth" through continuing observations, experience and experimentation. We would certainly find many of both these breeds hiding under the label of "economic history", old and new, just as I have been discovered under the label of "regional economics".

Professor North's writings derive their real value from focusing attention upon empirical, quantitative research as important to an understanding of past history as a means of gaining insights into the working of long-range economic development in general. This is a critically important matter. In the words of a former Alaskan, Professor Hans E. Jensen, now at the University of Tennessee: "Today there is an interest in the problems of economic growth which has not been matched since the days of Adam Smith, Thomas Robert Malthus, and Ricardo. The urgency of economic advancement in the underdeveloped regions of the world; the problem of maintaining in our country growth rates which will enable us to realize potential increase in welfare; and the challenge to the international position of the United States emanating from developed and underdeveloped countries alike, all have combined to create a new concern for economic growth on the part of American businessmen, workers, political leaders, social scientists, and educators." [8] In a series of articles on the general subject of economic growth he reviews the thinking of economists on the general subject of economic growth over a period of 200 years and the revival of interest in this subject as it has emerged as the burning economic issue of our times. The key person in the research effort is someone who sounds vaguely like the economic historian.

In a recent collection of essays on the history of economics, George J. Stigler of the University of Chicago, who is drawn upon by Professor Jensen, defines this role and puts its importance most clearly. He states that the "empirical study of economic life is the only way in which one can get a real feeling for the tasks and functioning of an economic system. The completely formal theorist does not know the range of subtlety of economic problems that arise each day . . . The formal theorist therefore has a much simplified picture of the world and of the complexity of the scientific theorems required to explain its operations." The "empirical research economist, who collects and systematizes the . . . facts of economic life" and who "has had the complexities of the economy burned into his soul" is the "only source of information for the specialized theorists (because) the only things the theoretical econ-

omist knows about economic life are those things the empirical economist tells him. All other sources . . . are unreliable and unrepresentative — in short, unscientific." [9]

The increasing post World War II concern for understanding of the phenomena of economic growth has given those engaged in the pursuit of economic history (or empirical research or whatever term you care to apply) a position of critical importance and influence far beyond their numbers and above the level of their scholarly output. If anything, the urgency for understanding in this field is greater in Alaska than in the nation as a whole. Every Alaskan is aware of the need for economic development if our State is to survive and prosper as a viable political entity. The political leaders and candidates of both parties campaign under the same banner of economic development. This was one of the underlying justifications for granting of statehood to Alaska. President Johnson's concern and understanding of its importance was institutionalized following the 1964 Good Friday earthquake in his creation of the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska.

To paraphrase Professor North, in Alaska there is the need for economic historians who are both skeptical of traditional interpretations of Alaska's history and economic development and convinced of the need for a new approach to the subject firmly grounded in sound statistical data. This requires courage and integrity as well as technical skill. We must have the honesty to look at Alaska's present and past development for just exactly what it is, a past highly selective and unstable colonial exploitation of a few natural resources and a presently governmental subsidized development, no more. Only in this way can we begin to gain the analytical insights essential for evolving sound proposals for our long-run economic development. There are other justifications for more intense and diverse activity in the field of Alaska's economic history and that is the contribution this can make to an understanding of phenomena of economic growth and change in general. Because of its relative isolation and simplicity and even its abnormality, the Alaskan economy is an ideal laboratory for gaining insights more readily than would be the case in more complex situations and for testing hypotheses and determining the results of experiments.

I hope these comments have rehabilitated the subject of economic history and Alaska economic history in your eyes. I do not anticipate, however, that any of this will cause a rush of high school history teachers from their present employments into the study of economics. But whether or not you realize it you are engaged in its teaching and you

are probably doing well or poorly in accordance with your awareness of this. In recent years wide-spread concern has been expressed over the low level of economic literacy of the general voting public who are assumed to be capable of coming to sound conclusions on an increasingly wide range of economic matters. For about a decade the American Economic Association in cooperation with other academic, business and labor associations has been engaged in a study of this problem and experiments in means of making the American public economically literate. The most important and continuing efforts have been directed toward high school teachers. Since only a small portion of all future citizen-voters will ever take as much as one introductory economics course in college (less than 50% of all present high school students will enter college and only about one-fourth of these will take even one economics course), attention has focused on the possibility of developing at least a modicum of economic understanding through teaching in high schools.

In 1963 copies of an important report, *Economics in the Schools,* were distributed to all high schools in the United States. This attempted to describe the "minimum understanding of economics essential for good citizenship and attainable by high school students," to evaluate the general level of teaching of economics ("distressing in its absence and unfortunate when attempted"), and to suggest means for improvement and expansion. The bulk of the report was concerned with the findings of a textbook study launched in 1959 and covering what must have been all or most of the textbooks in use in high school courses in economics, social problems and U.S. history. The last category, U.S. history was the one to which most attention was given. In the words of the report: "Textbooks for courses in U.S. history are not designed primarily to delineate economic principles. Yet so few high school students take a formal course in economics that much of their economic knowledge must be derived from such ancillary courses as problems of American democracy, civics, geography, world history, and United States history. United States history is an especially significant source of economic understanding to examine because it is taken by almost all students. Explaining the structures and operations of the economy and charting the course of our nation's history are far from identical tasks. Yet much of the history of the United States is to an appreciable degree economic in nature, and any substantial text in this area should include sound economic as well as social and political analysis." [10]

Although the texts generally recognized those economic forces which "could hardly be ignored in any treatment of the nation's historical development," the sub-committee found that important topics were omitted altogether, analysis was sparse and inaccurate, there was serious

imbalance in the topics treated, etc. But I will skip the bill of particulars and specific recommendations and jump to the general conclusions.

"The subcommittee is convinced that the subject matter of the course in United States history provides fertile ground for planting and nourishing seeds of economic understanding. Hamilton's financial program, the opposition to centralized banking, the demands for cheap money, the changing role of government, the rise of big business and organized labor, the farm problem, tariffs and international trade, and the Great Depression are only a few of the many topics which provide opportunities for the development of economic understanding."

"If these opportunities are to be exploited on the basis of the textbooks examined, however, the move must come largely from the teacher or supplementary materials; there is little economic life in the texts . . . The subcommittee's findings do suggest several important areas in which the United States history textbooks should be strengthened . . . In the last analysis, however, individual teachers must be sufficiently convinced of the importance of economic education to allocate classroom time to this area, to seek out curriculum opportunities for teaching economics, and to develop more fully their own economic knowledge and teaching skills. The need for widespread understanding of basic economic relations is urgent. The opportunities for teaching economics through the course in United States history are numerous and exciting. They await exploitation." [11]

At the outset I said the purpose of this Conference was to evaluate Alaskan historical scholarship, which I never did. But I hope you find that this has been some contribution to the promotion of the second of the "objectives" of the Conference as listed on the back page of the program: "To clarify the status of Alaskan history (in this case, economic history) for public school teachers and encourage closer attention to historical scholarship by social studies instructors in general." Let me recapitulate my principle points.

The first is that we must shed any narrow preconceptions we may have on economic history as being simply the pursuit of the past for its own sake, and of being insignificant or of minor importance because of the relatively small numbers engaged in the field. Its status is not to be judged in terms of number, but in terms of a re-examination and re-defining of purpose or objectives of the study of economic history in the light of the critical need to understand the phenomena of economic growth and change. This gives the subject and its practitioners a status of contemporary importance and influence far beyond their numbers and their output. Even what appears to be overly specific or trivial research

topics, such as the few articles mentioned by titles above, could be contributions to our insights and knowledge of long-run economic development.

All of this is heightened in Alaska's case as economic development is a prerequisite to our very survival. There has been a great deal of writing on Alaska economic history, none of which I have discussed, both general and specialized. Some is published, but most is in the form of unpublished scholarly research and government reports or little known reports. Alaskans should become better acquainted with their economic history and scholars have a responsibility to make the means of this knowledge more accessible.

But it is with the teachers of history in the high schools that the greatest challenge is given. Just to strengthen the last report I quoted above, let me restate its final conclusion in terms of the second objective of this conference. The need for widespread understanding of basic economic relationships is urgent, particularly in Alaska. The opportunities for teaching economics through the course in United States history and for teaching its application in Alaska through the course in Alaska history are numerous and exciting. They await exploitation.

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LANDMARKS AND OPEN QUESTIONS IN ALASKAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

A COMMENT

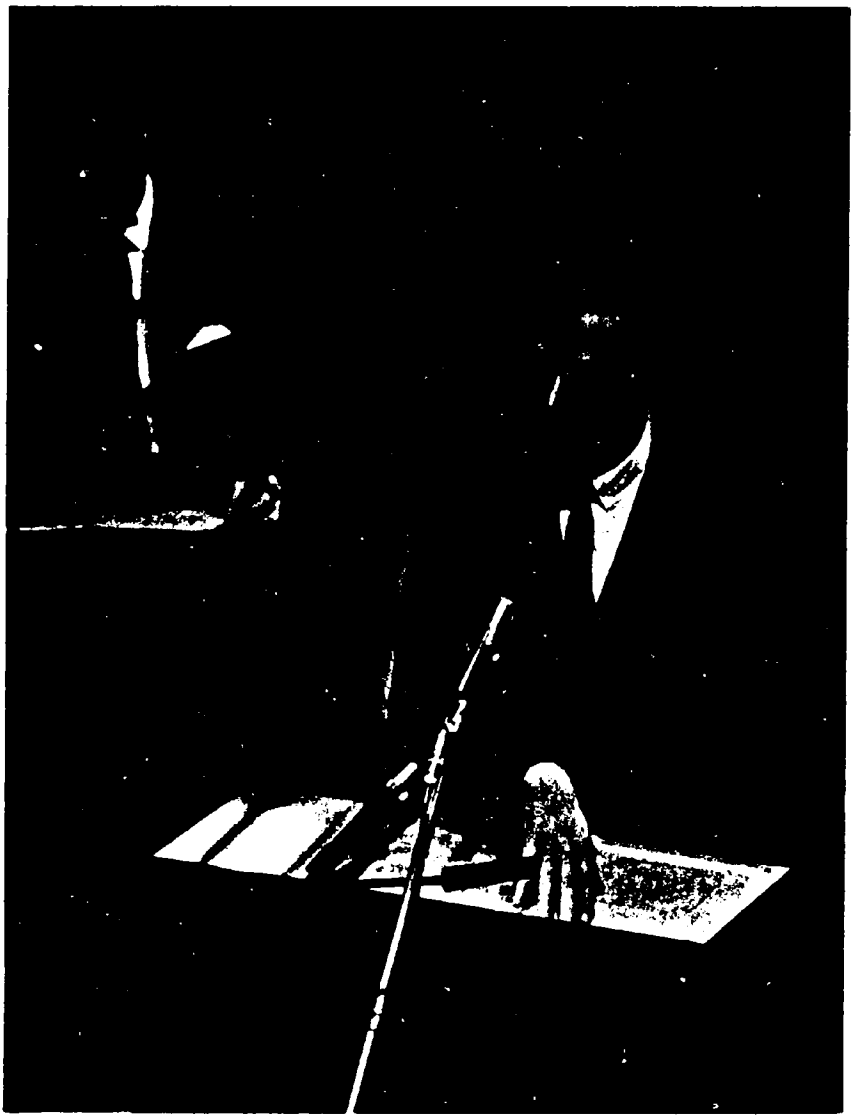
WILLIAM H. WILSON

There is considerable interest in the formal study of Alaska's economy. At the University of Alaska the Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research is publishing *The Alaska Monthly Review of Economic and Business Conditions* for the third year, and is sponsoring a monograph series, with individual volumes mostly on the marketing of Alaska products but including other economic topics. Recent issues of the *Alaska Review*, published by Alaska Methodist University, have contained articles ranging from the very careful evaluation of the present economy and its immediate prospects in "Alaska's Economy, the State of the State," by Dr. Douglas N. Jones, to Dr. Rogers' imaginative look at longer-range possibilities in "Avenues to Development." These and other publications and projects indicate the extent of current interest in our economy.[1]

The Centennial celebration has stimulated simultaneously a strong interest in Alaska's history. The presses of Alaska Methodist University, the University of Alaska, the University of Washington, and Yale University, among others, have been and will be publishing excellent historical volumes. Although others have done so, I mention Morgan Sherwood's compilation, *Alaska and Its History*, for the reason that here is a compilation that contains a number of articles on Alaskan economic history and they range from Russian American to the recent past. [2]

The lesson for the economic historian in the coincident concern for Alaska's economy and history is, "Strike while the iron is hot!" Be-

Dr. William H. Wilson, formerly an associate professor of history at the University of Alaska, will join the faculty in history at North Texas State University. The recipient of a research grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (1967-68), he is now in Seattle, Washington.



WILLIAM H. WILSON, now on leave with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, is writing a history of the Alaska Railroad. Formerly an associate professor at the University of Alaska, he will join the history faculty at North Texas State University. He presented two papers recently, "The Alaskan Engineering Commission and a New Type of Agricultural Frontier" (Pacific Coast Branch, American Historical Association) and "The Alaska Railroad and Territorial Development" (American Historical Association). The Pacific Northwest Quarterly, July, 1967, carries his "The Founding of Anchorage: Federal Town Building on the Last Frontier." In 1964 he published The City Beautiful Movement in Kansas City. A specialist in urban history, he has published many articles on the subject.

cause – the student of our economic history has a unique opportunity, now, to recreate the significant past and place it in the service of the present. After all, socio-economic conditions change rapidly in Alaska. A careful study, by a master's candidate for example, of the impact on Anchorage, of the arrival of the Army ground and air forces in 1940 would contribute a good deal to preparing us for any future similar development. There is no suggestion here for either "new" or "old" economic historians to abandon their techniques of researching, writing, or teaching. It is always an historian's purpose to analyze as well as to construct a narrative. Now is the time when the economic historian's analysis should be useful in formulating policies for the future. The historian studies the past and lives in the present, therefore he is best equipped to tell us which of the factors shaping Alaska's previous economic development are relevant to our own time and would appear to be binding upon the future as well.

There is a risk involved, the risk anyone runs when he finds that it may be necessary for him to deny conventional wisdom, established truths, and cherished myths. The risk for the economic hisorian is not that he will be denounced, but rather that he will be ignored. I'll have more to say about the latter danger – the risk of being ignored – near the conclusion of my remarks.

Our economic historian must make his effort and take his risks, anyway, an effort, I hope, that will have five good effects, provided he appreciates what a few fine economic historians have accomplished before him. I shall take up these five effects in turn, realizing all the while that your list may be shorter, or longer, and certainly better, than mine. These remarks should also fulfill the purpose of the conference in a small way by commenting on some Alaskan historical writing.

First, the study of our economic history should serve to join the Russian and American periods more closely together, and by doing so, reveal the relevance of the Russian experience. Few historians, other than textbook writers, have dealt with both eras, and even most textbook authors treat the two periods as separate developments that happened to occupy the same geographic area and that touched, briefly and colorfully, at the time of the purchase and transfer. There are reasons for this division between historians of the two eras. Those who come to Alaska history through a study of United States history, like myself, are put off by the formidable language barrier one must surmount if he is to do any primary work in the Russian period. Historians who approach Alaska by way of Slavic studies have little interest in acquiring the background information and knowledge of sources required for serious study of the American period. Yet it seems, to even a casual student of Russian Alaska,

that the Russians experienced some enduring political and economic problems. Under Russia, Alaska's central government was distant and its control for many years was monopolistic. The Russian-American Company and its predecessors discovered that Alaska was a high cost area best exploited, from their viewpoint, for quick profits. The Russians had serious trouble with their mining and agricultural enterprises, and found it difficult to penetrate the interior and maintain themselves in it. Edward L. Keithan, in "Alaska Ice, Inc." has shown us a group of American capitalists shipping ice to San Francisco during the last years of the Russian period and discovering how much Alaska industry was at the mercy of transportation improvements (the completion of the Southern Pacific railroad brought natural ice from the Sierras) and technological advances (artificial ice). Finally, the Russians learned that Alaska, though remote, was easily accessible and of potential economic and strategic value to others. And that keeping it meant diverting much energy to its defense. [3]

This brief catalogue of Russian experiences, not so different from subsequent American ones, is a possible beginning for a topical, comparative study of both eras, by someone qualified to undertake the work.

Second, certain studies could tell us to what degree the Alaska economy is *sui generis,* or is similar to those of other parts of North America. We Alaskans like to have it both ways. Our pitch to the prospective tourist stresses the romance of early trading, trapping, and prospecting, while our appeal to the possibly permanent settler is more likely to emphasize familiar and recent economic developments, to assure him he will not leave behind the TV stations, department stores, and other comforts he knew in the lower states. Referring to some of the literature, we find the authors of *The Federal Lands: Their Use and Management,* specifically excluding Alaska from their study because, they write, its climate, terrain and economy are radically different from the rest of the United States. Richard A. Cooley's *Alaska: A Challenge in Conservation,* a study in land and other resource use, would seem to confirm the view that Alaska has special resource problems and opportunities. On the other hand, Dr. Rogers and Cooley, in *Alaska's Population and Economy,* have developed a case for some parallels between Alaska's population growth, urbanization, labor force characteristics, and income changes, and those of the far west and mountain states.[4]

The economic historian could be useful here with comparative studies of, let's say, mining companies. The University of Alaska archives and other depositories have gathered records of Alaska mining companies. Rodman Paul and others have studied mining rushes and mining companies elsewhere. The economic historian should now be able to say how,

or whether, Alaska mining companies differed in their capital formation, methods of extraction, general operations, and costs from companies in other parts of this country and Canada. Unless circumstanees have changed radically, the study should begin to establish the extent of Alaska's "differentness," and suggest how new enterprises must plan to cope with it.[5]

Third, the economic historian should be able to tell us what the real requirements for successful operation in and around Alaska were, and what the real value of some Alaska resources was. The attacks upon the Alaska Steamship Company for its overall conduct — attacks amazing to the non-Alaskan, both in their volume and their vituperation — assume those requirements to have been not so different from requirements elsewhere. A careful study of Alaska Steam based on its own records, would tell us much about the necessity for the company's high rates. How much did those rates reflect a desire to make a lot of money, and to fleece Alaska in the bargain? How much of the high rates and the reputedly poor service may be traced to the high costs of the Alaska trade, such as the expense of serving the small concentrations of Alaska's scattered population from inadequately equipped docks? How much to the lack of a government subsidy, because the Alaska trade was considered coastwise and not international shipping?

To cite one specific incident, what may be said about Alaska Steam's carrying British Columbia coal north to Alaska ports in the 1930's? You know we had the Cordova Coal Party over that, a generation before. Was it part of a gigantic plot to strangle Alaska, masterminded by distant financial interests, as anyone sharing the old muckraking mentality would have us believe? Was it an example of a powerful quasimonopoly using its special political and economic position to do what it willed, at the expense of Alaska's development, as contemporary critics charged? Was it to make some money, as officials of the steamship company admitted? Was it to provide ballast on northbound trips so that bulky, heavy items could be carried on deck, and not dismantled, stowed in the hold, and charged a higher rate, as company officials insisted they would have been? What about the company's offer to carry Alaska coal south to the same ports at equitable rates, if Alaska coal could be had? And what does the lack of that coal say about the quality, quantity, and production costs of coal in Alaska? Which returns us to the first proposition, now cast as a question: would this study, and many more studies of large Alaska companies, confirm or deny the presistent allegations of overcharging and indifference to Alaska's vital needs and potentials?

These questions and many more like them may now be answered only partially or not at all, but by wrestling with them, the economic historian would, I believe, produce my fourth hoped-for good effect. That is, to raise and tentatively answer the questions, how and why do we want to develop Alaska, and to whom do we assign the benefits and costs of that development? In answering these questions, the economic historian would do well to take his cue from Dr. Rogers' expressions of social concern in the works already mentioned and in his excellent studies, *Alaska in Transition, the Southeast Region,* and *The Future of Alaska: the Economic Consequences of Statehood.* I think it is a fair summary of Dr. Rogers' views to say that national and regional economies exist to bring the greatest possible material and spiritual benefit to the people living within those economies, and that we study economies to achieve a better distribution of benefits. To put it another way, Dr. Rogers is biased in favor of people. It is a proper bias for any scholar. Let's assume, then, that our economic historian studying Alaska Steam concludes that, given the conditions of the Alaska trade and the private enterprise system, the company would have had to charge about the rates it did in order to survive. Let's also assume that he finds that those rates did indeed hamper small entrepreneural developments in Alaska. What then? It is within the province of our economic historian to suggest alternatives — let's say, subventions. He may suggest government subsidies for, or even government operation at a loss, of water and perhaps other carriers, provided the object is to develop Alaska for those who live in it. He could suggest, as Dr. Rogers has done, that some way should be found to include the native population more fully in the spread of benefits. Perhaps the monetary costs would outweigh the social gains for the relatively few who would have received, or would receive them.[6]

My fifth and final hope for the economic historian is that he will have an audience, that people will listen to him. He has not been well heeded thus far, if the impact on thought and policy of historical writing about the Matanuska Valley and its agriculture is any measure. Several historians, and others with other professional labels, have made excursions into history to study the Matanuska Valley Colony. Clarence C. Hulley's "Historical Survey of the Matanuska Valley Settlement in Alaska" appeared in the October, 1949 *Pacific Northwest Quarterly.* About the same time Kirk H. Stone published his longer *Alaskan Group Settlement: The Matanuska Valley Colony.* In 1955, Hugh A. Johnson's and Keith L. Stanton's *Matanuska Valley Memoir* appeared, followed eight years later by Louise Potter's *A Study of A Frontier Town in Alaska, Wasilla to 1959,* a book larger in scope than its title indicates. In 1965 Orlando Miller completed his scholarly study, *The Frontier in Alaska*

and the Matanuska Colony. It is presently in the form of his doctoral dissertation, and is a work that ranges, as the title suggests, far beyond the Matanuska Valley. The most recent book-length study we have is Evangeline Atwood's *We Shall Be Remembered*.[7]

Each of these authors has written the blend of economic, political, and social history that the subject requires. Each has written from his own viewpoint, and to his own audience. Each has written from sources similar, but not identical to those of the others. Yet it would seem to the open-minded reader, whatever his sympathies, that commercial agriculture in Alaska was a dubious proposition, a few producers in specialized lines excepted. My own research convinces me that the obstacles to Alaska agriculture known now, were well understood by 1918, after the Alaskan Engineering Commission had tried to develop a brisk local and export market for the some 400 settlers then in the Valley and had completely failed. Most of the historical writing on the Valley is available to those who today argue for the bright future or the great potential of Alaska agriculture. This failure to apply the past sensibly to the present and future may be the result of our boundless optimism, or possibly of our unlimited capacity for self-delusion.

Hopefully, we shall move from mere optimism, or self-delusion, or perhaps indifference, to the realism required for writing, reading, teaching and applying Alaska's economic history. There is no better time than now.

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5 Rodman Paul's books include California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West (reprint ed.; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964); and Mining Frontiers of the Far West 1848-1880. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963).

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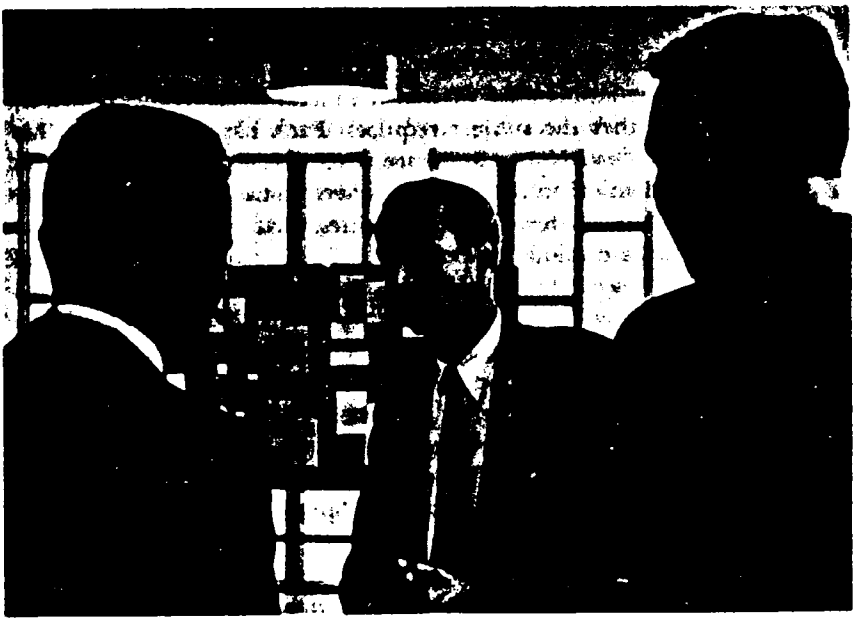

Two California historians speak to the Times. (left to right) Ted C. Hinckley, San Jose State, and Rodman W. Paul, Cal Tech, above insights with Frank Bunbo of the Anchorage Daily Times.

Searching the professional and popular journals. (see page 27 and 28)

PRAGMATISM ON THE FRONTIER

I say you shall remember them. I say
When night has fallen on your loneliness
And the deep wood beyond the ruined wall
Seems to step forward swiftly with the dusk,
You shall remember them. You shall not see
Water or wheat or axe-mark on the tree
And not remember them.
You shall not win without remembering them,
For they won every shadow of the moon,
All the vast shadows, and you shall not lose
Without a dark remembrance of their loss
For they lost all and none remembered them.

Hear the wind
Blow through the buffalo-grass,
Blow over wild-grape and brier.
This was frontier, and this,
And this, your house, was frontier.
There were footprints upon the hill
And men lie buried under,
Tamers of earth and rivers.
They died at the end of labor,
Forgotten is the name.

Now, in full summer, by the Eastern shore,
Between the seamark and the roads going West,
I call two oceans to remember them.
I fill the hollow darkness with their names.

—Stephen Vincent Benet
Western Star

PATTERNS OF CULTURE IN THE AMERICAN WEST

RODMAN WILSON PAUL

To any one who has even glanced at the program for this conference, it should be obvious that my talk tonight is the one inexplicable element in an otherwise logical and cohesive scheme. Every one else has discussed some aspect of Alaskan history or anthropology, and every one else has participated because he had special qualifications in some field of Alaskan studies. When Professors Sherwood and Frederick invited me to come here, I protested that I am not well informed about Alaskan history. Professors Sherwood and Frederick quickly reassured me. They said that I was being invited precisely because of my ignorance. This flattering assurance was based upon the notion that after two days of examining Alaskan history, you might be ready to hear about the history of a part of the nation that has had experiences that are in some respects similar to Alaska's, and that might perhaps serve as suggestive parallels.

This concept for tonight's talk fits in with my own preoccupations. What I am going to say grows directly out of thoughts generated while planning a book that I now have under construction. Briefly stated, it seems to me that we have been too ready to accept easy generalizations about the settlement of the American west, generalizations that may be true as far as they go, but that do not penetrate deeply enough. Tonight, as a means of gaining a deeper insight, I want to ask you to examine the rich variety of social and economic patterns that Americans developed when faced by the need for supporting themselves in the nineteenth century west. This means studying some distinctive communities that were as remote and primitive as anything found here in Alaska in this state's early days.

I want to discuss four instances: the Mormon farmers in the arid Great Basin of Utah; the gold miners in the forested foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains of California; the cattlemen on the treeless, semi-arid Great Plains; and certain lumber corporations in the well-

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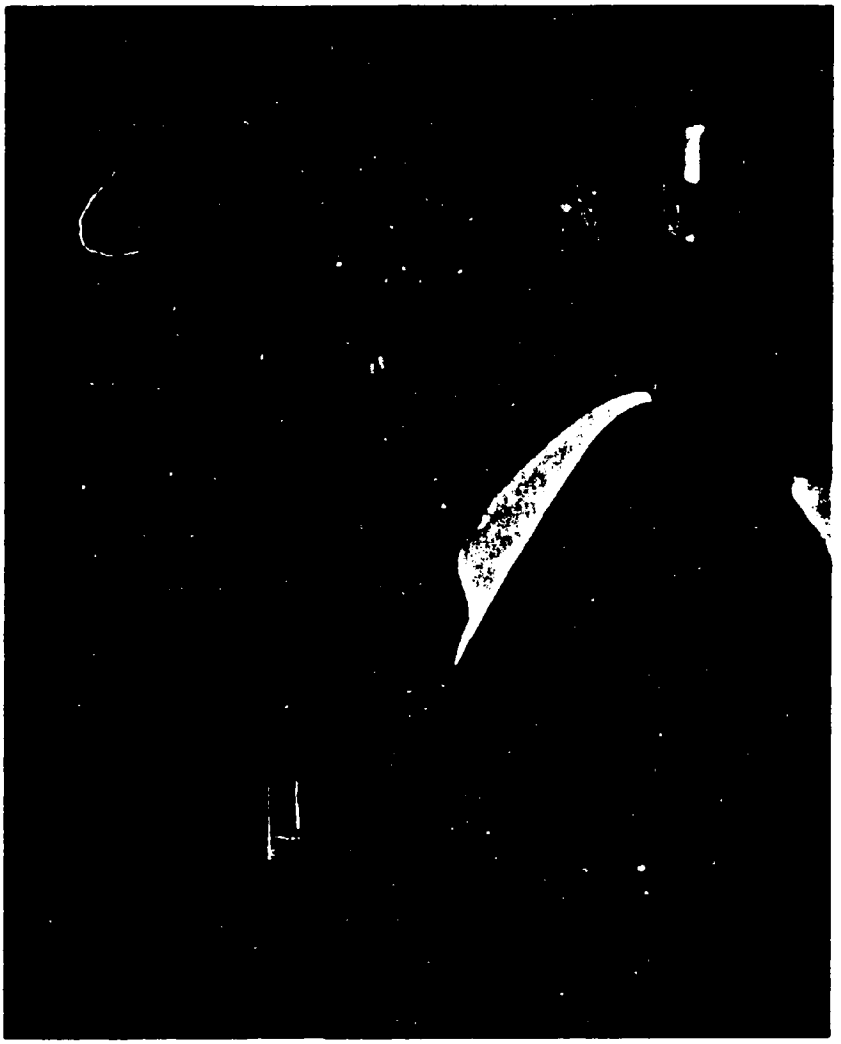

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watered, heavily forested Pacific Northwest. Chronologically we will be talking of the half century from 1847 to about 1900. The four instances have been chosen precisely because they are so different from one another. Two of them, the miners and the lumbermen, have an obvious relevance for Alaskan history.

In each case we will be looking to see how men sought to use the natural resources; how much ingenuity they had to show; and how much they had to adapt their accustomed social, economic, and technological patterns to the demands of the physiographic environment.

The Mormons were simple people of predominantly New England origins. Upstate New York, where Mormonism was founded, was heavily settled by a transplanted New England population. For example, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were born in Vermont, of poor families that had migrated from Massachusetts, and were presently to move on to New York State.

These Mormons were dominated by the older pattern of New England thinking that was more characteristic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than of the nineteenth. Where most nineteenth century Americans were breaking loose and seeking their fortunes as individuals and in accordance with notions of laissez faire, these simple, poorly educated Mormons still thought in the older New England tradition that stressed the community rather than the individual. To this unifying inheritance the Mormons added the cementing force of an authoritarian religious organization – a theocracy – that reached into every phase of life. And to it they added the further unifying influence of sharing in the common memory of having been persecuted together.

It was persecution, of course, that sent the Mormons on their long journey from the Mississippi Valley to Great Salt Lake. Their move to the Great Basin and their colonization of that unpromising region was a triumph of disciplined effort. Their very able leader, Brigham Young, had to transport 16,000 people a distance of 1200 miles across the plains and the Rockies, and there settle them in new homes. Each wagon train was carefully organized, firmly led, and its daily routine specified in detail. Once in the Great Basin, each new settlement, starting with Salt Lake City, was provided initially with a balanced population that included men designated as leaders, an assortment of craftsmen such as blacksmiths and carpenters, experienced farmers, a school teacher, a few people of relatively substantial means who could support themselves, and the rank and file who might need varying degrees of help. This was precisely the way in which New England towns were founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Each town was laid out according to the old New England pattern. The actual residences were clustered together on neat, orderly house lots in the center of town, so that the families could enjoy each other's company and support, and could share in common cultural and business facilities. The farm lots, on which the crops were grown, lay beyond the residential area, while still a third body of land was set aside as a common pasture.

This whole scheme of orderly settlement was carried out under the leadership of the heads of the Mormon church. But though the church was the central, controlling force in all things, there was no professional priesthood. Instead, all male Mormons were priests. Any man might hold any office in the church, if his abilities attracted attention.

The most intriguing of all Mormon achievements was their successful resort to irrigation. Ninety-five percent of the Great Basin is desert or mountain. The Wasatch mountains above Salt Lake City catch rain and snow in ample amounts, and small streams bring the water down toward Salt Lake. Altitude makes a tremendous difference in regard to water supply in the west. At the 10,000 foot level in the Wasatch, the average annual precipitation is 30 to 40 inches per year; 40 miles west of the mountain crest, the precipitation is only 6 inches per year. At the foot of the Wasatch there is a narrow belt of good alluvial soil awaiting water.

Irrigation was a familiar practice in some parts of the world, such as the Middle East, but no significant body of English-speaking peoples had ever before lived in a climate that required it. Our cultural background is that of a humid-land people. How and why did these simple, poorly educated, transplanted New England folk happen to start irrigation? That is the sort of fundamental question a historian yearns to answer. We have a dairy kept by a Mormon pioneer, Orson Pratt. Describing activities on the morning after the advance party reached Salt Lake, Pratt stated:

> We appointed various committees to attend to different branches of business, preparatory to putting in crops, and in about two hours after our arrival we began to plow, and the same afternoon built a dam to irrigate the soil, which at the spot where we were plowing was exceedingly dry.

That's all the explanation there is. The ground was dry, so they irrigated. For a historian, this is utterly frustrating.

Experience in Utah soon proved that water was the key to life in the Great Basin. These simple settlers had manpower but little money.

So they organized cooperatively. Committees were chosen to supervise construction of dams and ditches. The labor was contributed by the men who expected to use the water. In this way thousands of miles of canals were built with no bonded debt at all. When each dam and canal was completed, a watermaster was elected to regulate the distribution of water.

All of this settlement was on the public domain, but because the Mormons were polygamous, and thus unpopular politically, Congress waited until 1869 to extend to Utah the operation of the normal United States land laws. By that time Utah had a population of 86,000, and yet there had never been a means of acquiring legal title to land. Therefore for 22 years the Mormons themselves distributed the lands and decided on titles according to their own locally made rules.

The church saw to it that irrigable land was distributed only in small tracts. The church asserted the basic principle that the water belonged to the community, not to individuals, and therefore the territorial legislature and county courts could decide how that water was to be used. Until 1880 the courts normally required that the right to use the water should go with the right to use the land. When disputes arose, the county courts handled them quickly and inexpensively. Yet individual rights were safeguarded.

The Mormons were a case of a highly organized, old-fashioned people who were led by their church into a cooperation that was ideally suited to the demands of an unusually exacting climatic region. Settlement on a purely individual basis would probably have failed. To study individualism at work, one must turn to a totally different sort of pioneer — the gold miners. I have suggested that farming with irrigation was a new experience for English-speaking people. So was gold mining. Before the discovery of gold in California in 1848, a few Americans had done small-scale, primitive gold mining in Georgia and the Carolinas, and there were Cornishmen, Welshmen, Germans, and Irishmen whose families had been miners of one sort or another for many generations.

But for most of the men who hurried to California in 1848, '49, and the early '50's mining was entirely new. Yet at least a quarter of a million men rushed to California during the first five years of the Gold Rush. Not all actually became miners, though most tried it for at least a time. By the middle to late 1850's nearly 100,000 men in California described themselves as "miners".

There could hardly be a greater contrast than between the miners and the Mormons. The miners were decisively 19th century individualists. They had been swept into the rush to California by a desire to get rich and a love of excitement and change. They came from all parts of the world, including even China, and from all levels of society. They were

strangers to one another. Most of them expected to return to their homes in the east, or Europe, or Latin America, or Asia, as soon as they got rich or got tired.

They had little sense of loyalty to the new community of gold-rush California, and little sense of responsibility for what happened in the public sector of their lives – for example, in maintaining law and order. Their mining towns and camps were haphazard. When some one discovered gold in a new district, a crowd would rush in and lay claim to all the available ground. A merchant or saloon keeper would set himself up in business at some casually chosen point, and around that store or saloon a settlement would develop, with tents, hovels, and cabins strewn around in erratic fashion, and the ground littered with empty bottles, tin cans, old clothes, and garbage.

Amidst all this activity, there was suffering, hardship, and disease, but the relatively mild climate of the Sierra Nevada foothills, and the freedom from rain in summer, made life a good deal easier than was to be true of later similar mining booms in harsher regions such as the northern Rockies or southern Arizona.

In California the gold rush crowd found only a most limited existing government. In 1848-49 California was being ruled by a weak American military regime that had been superimposed on top of the old Mexican local government. After 1849 California had its own state government, but it took months to organize county and town administrations; it took several years to get the new state statutes into print and into general circulation. And the voting public was exceedingly careless about the quality and honesty of its elected officials.

On top of the governmental uncertainty that this implies, there was the further difficulty that gold mining was taking place on land that was part of the public domain of the United States. But just as Congress failed to extend the Federal land laws to Utah until 1869, so did it fail to make any provision for granting title to mineral lands or mining claims until 1866. Even then, only one type of mining claim was covered, quartz or vein, until a second statute was passed in 1872.

This all means that the Californians faced simultaneously the problems of learning how to mine, deciding how to establish title to mining claims, and maintaining enough of a semblance of law and order to make life endurable. All of these requirements they managed to supply on a do-it-yourself basis.

They learned how to mine by copying the few experienced hands from Georgia, Spanish America, or Cornwall. They were fortunate in that early mining was relatively simple. For several years it was possible to earn a living by using rudimentary techniques and primitive equipment

of a type that had been known ever since the Middle Ages. But thereafter, as the more easily worked gold deposits were exhausted, something more elaborate became necessary.

The early California mining men were scornful about what might be learned from university-trained geologists and engineers. Most of the technical gains during the 1850's were the result of trial-and-error experimenting by ingenious Yankees, although some important advances, especially in metallurgy, were contributed by a few well-trained Germans, and Cornishmen taught them about underground mining. With justification, the Californians could boast at the end of the 1850's that they had advanced the state of mechanical engineering as applied to mining by more than had been achieved during several centuries in Europe and Spanish America. They had not made comparable gains in metallurgy or underground operations.

They could claim by far the biggest output of gold that had ever been taken from any part of the earth's surface in so short a time. In the first dozen years California probably produced over $600,000,000 worth of gold — an almost incredible performance. On the negative side, this vast fortune was won in a most wasteful fashion. Claims were worked in the quickest rather than the most efficient fashion. A high percentage of the gold was lost — thrown out with the debris. The whole countryside was literally dug up and turned upside down. The trees were stripped from the hills to be used for construction and fuel.

In their social relations the miners' record was uneven. Simple rules for determining ownership of claims and permissible dimensions of claims were learned from those same Georgians, Cornishmen, or Spanish Americans. Enforcement was more difficult. Lacking legal governmental agencies, the miners of each newly discovered area assembled in open meeting and declared themselves a self-governing "district". They drafted a code of rules for determining ownership of claims, based primarily upon discovery and actual use. The miners provided that disputes should be tried before a popularly chosen jury or judge, or even before the whole camp. Crimes were handled in the same fashion, with attorneys, a judge, and jury chosen from the crowd.

This system of do-it-yourself jurisprudence worked fairly well for several years. Thereafter it developed increasing difficulties. In the field of crime, this self-constituted system should have yielded place to the new legitimate agencies of the state, but once established in a weakly governed society, lynch law and vigilanteism proved very difficult to check. In the field of mining law the showing was better, but as the gold rush receded, the surviving miners became careless and failed to keep their records and rules up-to-date. Thereby they opened the way for fraud and

sharp practices in the mines, and for long and costly lawsuits when disputes were shifted over to the regular state courts.

The California gold rush brought to California more than ten times as many people as the Mormon exodus carried to the Utah Zion; it produced far more wealth and far more waste; it gave rise to a much higher technology; it established one great city, San Francisco, which developed a far more lively cultural life than anything produced at Salt Lake; and yet on the whole, the gold rush created communities that were far less permanent than Utah's and of course much less orderly.

If the miners were extemporizing a way of life based on exploiting the public domain without benefit of Congressional statutes, so did our third group, the cattlemen of the Great Plains. Here the origins were mixed. Up in the northern plains, along the much-traveled Oregon Trail, a scattering of cattle ranches developed to supply fresh livestock to the emigrants who were plodding over the trail. Down in Southern Texas, in the meantime, there were some real ranches staffed by Spanish-speaking people, around San Antonio, and further north and east, in Texas, Arkansas and Missouri, there were farms and plantations where Americans were getting a good deal of experience handling cattle and horses, although in partially timbered country rather than out on the prairies and plains.

Then came the interruption of the Civil War, and immediately after it the thrust westward of several railroads that originated in the Mississippi valley. The men who returned to Texas from service in the Confederate army found that their livestock had run wild during the war and had multiplied. Wild cattle were so numerous that beef scarcely had a price in Texas. But suppose one were to drive his cattle northward to feed the mining camps of Colorado; or to sell to the Indian reservations; or better still, suppose one were to drive the cattle north to Kansas to intersect one of the new railroads that led straight back to big urban markets like St. Louis and Chicago? Cattle that were worth only $3 or $4 per head in Texas were worth $30 or $40 in northern markets.

So began the famous Long Drive, one of the best known and most romanticized episodes in western history. Each spring, starting with 1866, Texas ranchers would put together herds of perhaps 2500 head of the tough, hardy Texas longhorn cattle. With a trail crew consisting of the boss or a foreman, eight or nine cowboys, a cook and a horse wrangler, the herd would head north, on a trip that would take three

or four months, or longer. After a few years' experience, the Texans reduced the whole venture to a simple but effective routine. Their worst enemies were farmers, Indians, thunderstorms that stampeded the cattle, and uncertainty as to grass and water.

At first the objective of the Long Drive was nearly always one of the railroad towns in Kansas, such as Abilene or Dodge City. In the fifteen years from 1866 to 1880, 4¼ million Texas cattle were driven north to Kansas rail points.

Soon it became evident that if cattle could be grown profitably on the Texas plains, so could they on the more northerly plains of Colorado, western Nebraska, Wyoming, the western Dakotas, and eastern Montana. So some of the Texas drives were pointed well to the north to stock these new ranges. Within fifteen years' time the short-grass plains were occupied all the way from southern Texas up into southern Canada. This was the cattle kingdom.

The setting for both the Long Drive and the new ranches was a special one: the Great Plains. Until now no one had regarded the Great Plains as anything but a difficult barrier that had to be crossed in order to get from east to west. It was buffalo country, without visible commercial use. The limiting characteristic of the Great Plains was deficient rainfall. The eastern boundary of the plains proper is at a most important climatic dividing point: the line of semi-aridity. This occurs approximately along the 98th or 100th meridian. West of that line the rainfall is less than 20 inches per year. Crops cannot ordinarily be grown without irrigation where there is less than 20 inches; a cow will require 30 acres' grazing per year in such a region. To give you a basis for comparison, the United States east of the Mississippi has from two to four times as much precipitation.

Reflecting this deficient rainfall, the Great Plains offered almost no trees for building purposes or fuel. The cowboy found fuel for his campfire by burning what he called "buffalo chips" — a euphemism for cow flop. But the ground was covered with short grass. Grass and water were the two natural resources the cattleman wanted. Our English-speaking ancestors had lived for centuries in a forested environment. The western cattleman was the first to develop a way of life based on exploiting semi-arid grasslands. This was an old story to Spanish-speaking peoples. It was from the Mexicans by way of Texans that the techniques of driving and herding cattle on open lands were learned.

Of the cowboy Philip Ashton Rollins has written:

> To the Mexicans the American cowboy owed his vocation. For his character he was indebted to no one . . . . He obtained from Mexican sources all the tools of his trade, all the technic of his craft, the very words by which he designated his utensils, the very animals with which he dealt; but, as one of the dominant figures in the development of the United States, he was self-made.

Most of the cowboys were American born, with an especially large number from Texas and western Missouri, but Mexicans, American Indians, and a few European immigrants were always to be found among them. The ranchers, that is, the employer class, were much more varied. They came from every part of the United States, from Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe. Unlike their hired hands, they represented every level of culture from virtual illiteracy to college degrees.

As they changed from being cattle drovers to settling down as ranchers, the cattlemen faced the problem of land titles. The basis of their industry was the free use, without permission, of the Federal public domain. The chief exceptions were in Colorado, where some Mexican land grants existed, and Texas, where the public domain belonged to the state rather than the federal government.

Most cattlemen simply picked out a stretch of unoccupied public domain that had a source of water. There were no Federal statutes aimed especially at the cattleman's needs, but there were laws such as the Homestead Act, intended to encourage farmers. The cattleman quickly learned how to distort these statutes to meet his requirements. The rancher himself would locate a homestead claim, carefully situated so as to monopolize the principal source of water. He would pay his cowboys to file claims that blanketed the remaining sources. Never mind if the cowboys had to swear false oaths before the land agent; on the Great Plains the important consideration is control of the water.

With all water supplies safely seized, the cattleman could count on unchallenged use of the surrounding open range. But this sort of arrangement was never quite airtight. Determined newcomers kept trying to thrust their way into a profitable business. As the land became more crowded, troubles multiplied. The cattle strayed onto adjacent ranges and had to be separated out in periodic roundups. There had to be rules for conducting roundups, there had to be a record of brands, a record of what was called the "accustomed range" of each cattleman, and a means of arbitrating disputes. There had to be a means of joint action to discourage such nuisances as cattle thieves, Indians, and farmers. Finally,

there had to be some way of preventing excessive overgrazing of the public domain.

So the cattlemen formed local associations to regulate such problems. The associations took shape rather slowly. Unlike the Mormons, who came west with cooperation already established as a habit, and unlike the miners, who from the beginning found themselves forced into self-constituted local districts, the cattlemen preferred isolation and resorted to cooperative effort only when the presence of too many unwanted neighbors compelled them to do so. Ultimately local associations of cattlemen were expanded to have jurisdiction over entire states or territories. In Wyoming, where there were no sizeable farming or mining groups to check them, the Stock Growers' Association came virtually to dominate the government and politics of the territory.

Cattlemen's associations accomplished many things, but preventing overgrazing was not one of them. Too much new money was coming in for investment, and too many newcomers were seeking pasture. The wiser men realized what was happening, and began to transform their open range operations into something more permanent. The invention of barbed wire back in Illinois in 1873-74 at last gave them a fencing material that they could afford, on the treeless plains, and they started fencing off both the land they owned and the public domain that they were accustomed to use. They imported pure-bred bulls to improve the quality of their stock. From railroad land grants and speculators they bought land, and by more twisting of the Federal statutes they got further chunks of the Federal domain.

In short, even before disaster struck, the open range was passing. Like the early mining districts, it was proving to be a temporary phase. Then a hot, dry summer that stunted the grass was followed by a severe winter in 1886-87. Tens of thousands of emaciated cattle died in the winter blizzards, and hundreds of newly rich cattle barons suddenly found themselves poor.

The cattlemen, like the miners, had been not only using but depleting a great natural resource that didn't belong to them. Much the same was true of the lumbermen of the Pacific Northwest, who constitute our fourth and final group. A lumber industry began to develop on Puget Sound as soon as the California gold rush created a demand for forest products. Unlike any of the regions we have discussed so far, Puget Sound had a good annual rainfall and dense forests that grew down to the water's edge. Precisely because of the heavy forests, the area was difficult to clear for farming, but for lumbering the combination of dense stands of timber and easy access to salt water transportation was ideal.

The most interesting feature of the Puget Sound industry was the extent to which it was absentee-owned and was developed by corporations, rather than by individuals or cooperative effort. The reason was simply that from 1849 onward San Francisco was easily the dominant market for the whole Pacific Coast, and San Francisco was decades ahead of the Northwest in developing capital, business managers, sources of machinery and skilled labor, and sea-going transportation.

But in using the term San Francisco, it is well to distinguish between lumber operations that were distinctively Californian, and those that owed their origins to eastern interests, even though they worked through San Francisco. One of the earliest firms to operate on Puget Sound was Pope & Talbot. This firm was founded in San Francisco in 1851 by men from East Machias, Maine, where their families had been in the lumber and shipbuilding business for several generations.

To begin their venture on Puget Sound, the Pope and Talbot group went back to Maine and took command of two ships built in their families' East Machias yards. They loaded into the ships a set of sawmilling equipment (Down East pattern), and a crew of experienced mill hands from East Machias. They even brought with them enough ready-to-use Down East building lumber to construct their first sawmill and bunkhouse. Once operations were well started on Puget Sound, subsequent ships brought out more machinery and more mill workers from East Machias. On Puget Sound they created a transplanted Maine town, characterized by a strongly clannish feeling. The story is told that one day a man fell off the wharf and was drowning. Nobody paid any attention to him until suddenly they realized the poor fellow was from East Machias. Then they consented to rescue him.

The loggers and teamsters doing manual work out in the woods often were local western men, but the bosses, foremen, mill hands, mechanics, and clerks all came from East Machias. They lived in a company town, they were served by a company store, and in lieu of alarm clocks were awakened by a steam whistle at 5:20 every morning, so that they would be at work by 6.

By 1858 the Pope & Talbot mill was by far the biggest enterprise on Puget Sound. Its main market was San Francisco, but since the San Francisco market often became overstocked, Pope & Talbot ships also carried cargoes to Hawaii, the Philippines, Australia, and South America. The firm's original investment of $30,000 appears to have grown to half a million dollars within ten years, and to have gone well into the millions thereafter.

For years Pope & Talbot bought their raw logs from hand loggers, who cut timber near the water's edge and floated it in rafts to the

Pope & Talbot mills. The purchasers seem to have asked no questions about the source of the logs. Most must have come from the public domain. But realizing that free public timber would not last forever, Pope & Talbot began acquiring title to land. Congress had never voted statutes to help the lumbermen, any more than to help the cattlemen. As the noted reform editor, E. L. Godkin, remarked, it was practically impossible to make an honest purchase of timber land from the public domain.

But like the cattlemen, the lumbermen found it possible to acquire title by various means – some legitimate, some extremely dubious. They bought land from the grants that had been made to the states for educational and other purposes, and they bought out individuals who had taken out claims under the Homestead and other acts. Just as the cattlemen had their cowboys enter questionable claims under the Homestead Act, so Pope & Talbot had the sailors from their lumber ships make false claims under the Timber and Stone Act, which had been passed to help actual farm settlers.

When overproduction became a serious problem in the 1880's, Pope & Talbot joined other San Francisco lumbermen in forming a "pool", that is, a cooperative arrangement to regulate distribution in the San Francisco market and production at the competing mills on Puget Sound. The pool not only specified the maximum number of hours that a mill might operate each week, but it also had its own inspectors to see that the agreement was obeyed.

This interesting transfer of a whole scheme of operations from the coast of Maine to Puget Sound was duplicated on a bigger scale at the close of the century. Middle Westerners who had made fortunes while denuding the upper Great Lakes states of trees, now began to shift their money, men, and machinery to the Pacific Northwest, which was now being put into direct contact with the whole nation by railroad.

The greatest transfer by far was that started by the Weyerhaeuser interests, one of the most successful of all the firms in the upper Great Lakes regions. In a single purchase in 1900 Frederick Weyerhaeuser and his associates bought from the Northern Pacific Railroad 900,000 acres of timber land, for $5,400,000. Subsequent purchases brought the Weyerhaeuser holdings to over 2,000,000 acres in Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho by 1914. The Weyerhaeuser people assert that all of their lands were obtained by legitimate purchase, and I presume that is true. The dishonesty had occurred one stage earlier, when the sellers had secured their original titles from the federal government.

Regardless of the ancestry of their titles, the Weyerhaeusers have become a progressive firm on the Pacific Coast. By their Great Lakes standards, the lumber industry of the Pacific Northwest seemed to them

in a rather primitive stage when the Weyerhaeusers first arrived. They moved into lumber manufacturing far more slowly than into land acquisition, and with huge holdings to protect, they became a major force in pushing the northwest into establishing fire precautions and conservation measures. When the state of Washington proved slow in appropriating enough money for fire wardens, the Weyerhaeusers took the lead in forming a private association of lumbermen to raise money each year and hire rangers and fire wardens. The association set and enforced standards for disposing of slash. Meantime the Weyerhausers have developed a philosophy and a practice for sustained, long-term use of the timber lands. The smaller firms protest that they can't affort such measures, since all of their capital is tied up in their timber

To summarize the four instances I have chosen, we have seen that in each case the early comers, the pioneers, found no suitable Federal statutes under which they could legally engross parts of the public domain. So in each instance the expectant capitalists devised their own rules and operated under them for years. All but the Mormons were notably wasteful in their use of the natural resources. The purpose was to achieve a quick return and then move on, there was little thought to the future. In two cases, the Mormons and the cattlemen, the requirements and potentialities of a new environment inspired the invention of a way of life that was unlike anything practiced hitherto among English-speaking peoples. The miners made a comparable break with precedent. Their achievement was partly technological, partly the creation of a large economic surplus in what would otherwise have been a poor land. The lumbermen seem to have been much less innovative than the miners, and no more permanent in the settlements that they inspired. Thus it is a varied picture that we find when we probe into actual cases of pioneering in the American west. The truth is much more complicated than the familiar generalizations to which we have all been accustomed. Would it not be appropriate to make similar studies of Alaska's experience? Surely here, too, we would find patterns of culture that would tell much about our national ability to adapt to a strikingly new environment.

EPILOGUE

An economist speaks his mind. George W. Rogers (facing camera), Maryan Sherwood (left, back to camera), Robert Frederick (right, back to camera), and engrossed participants.

Star-rocket, bursting when the dawn was grey,
Will-o'-the-wisp that led the riflemen
Westward and westward, killing down the day,
Until, at last, they had to turn again,
Burnt out like their own powder in the quest
Because there was no longer any West.

Only the treeless ocean, and the shock
Of the long roller, breaking from Japan,
The black sea-lion, roaring on his rock,
But never a quarry for a rifleman
Until the windy night came down once more
And the sea rustled like a forest-floor.

Then it arose, beyond the last dark wave,
Mockingly near, unmercifully far,
Cold with enchantment, naked from the grave,
The free-born image, the outlier's star,
The loadstone of the iron in the breast,
Never to be forgotten or possessed.

—Stephen Vincent Benet
Western Star

Were the day clear I could see Mount McKinley from the window. As I picture in my mind its stupendous height, I compare it to our science. Many have assailed its flanks; some have proclaimed untruths about it; some have climbed by great effort well up the slopes; a very few, the best by natural selection, have reached the summit and there attained the broad vision denied those at lower altitudes. As for me, I am satisfied to have been able to traverse the great lowland to the base and to climb the foothills.

— Alfred Hulse Brooks
Quoted in Morgan Sherwood,
Exploration of Alaska 1865-1900

ON IMAGINATION AND NEW PATHS

OUR MULTI-FRONTIER IN THE FAR NORTH

ROBERT A. FREDERICK

Among the tombs at Westminster this inscription heralds an Elizabethan scholar whose chronicles promoted global discovery and exploration.

RICHARD HAKLYT

Queen's Scholar of Westminster School
Student of Christ Church, Oxford
Archdeacon of Westminster
Thirty Years Prebendary of the Cathedral

His studious Imagination discovered new Paths for geographical Science and his Patriotic labours rescued from Oblivion not a few of those who went down to the sea in ships to the Harbingers of Empire, descrying new Lands and finding new Room for the Race.

ALASKA: THE FORGOTTEN FRONTIER

Historians of European and American civilization have neglected the study of Alaskan history. During the 126 years of Russian rule, imperial nonchalance with its New World frontier was characterized by the old provincial expression, "heaven is high, and the Tsar is far away." St. Petersburg's disinterest, fear, and ignorance culminated

Dr. Robert A. Frederick is professor of history at Alaska Methodist University.

Senator Ernest Gruening and Robert A. Frederick

ROBERT A. FREDERICK, Director of the Conference on Alaskan History, is Coordinator and Professor of History at Alaska Methodist University (Anchorage). He received his doctorate from Indiana University. In the same year (1960), he joined the first faculty of AMU in establishing the College of Liberal Arts. Accredited in 1964, AMU is the only private institution of higher learning in the forty-ninth state offering both undergraduate degrees and the master of arts in teaching. Since 1960, five historians have been added to the department: LOWELL RAGATZ, Professor emeritus, Ohio State University; M. DAVID YAMAMOTO, Kwansei Gakuin (Japan) and Ohio State University, now on leave as AMU Exchange Professor at Nagoya Gakuin (Japan); TSUGUO ARAI, Kwansei Gakuin (Japan) and the University of Toronto; and JUSTIN J. STAUTER, University of Washington. FANG-QUEI QUO, Formosan scholar, now at the University of Lethbridge (Alberta), served from 1962 until 1964. Frederick, a specialist in Russian history, colonial and recent America, entered the study of Alaskan history with the publication of a bibliography, "Caches of Alaskana: Library and Archival Sources of Alaskan History" (Alaska Review II-3, 1966-67). With a special interest in the conservation movement, he is currently working on a biography, "Richard Lieber and the Preservation of American Landscape."

in the sale of Russian America to the United States. Seward's purchase of Alaska was so controversial and the "icebox" myth so widely believed that the far northern frontier entered the Union under a cloud if not a glacier. Some who came north and many former Russian Americans who remained substituted "Washington" in the old saying. However, recent historians have pointed to the preoccupation of Washington with problems of reconstruction in the South, the difficulty of travel to remote Alaska, diminished interest in frontier living, etc. One historian has declared that all that could be done by the federal government at the time was accomplished. [1] Washington sent the Army to occupy certain posts, the Navy to patrol coastal waters, and scientists to survey its uncharted wilderness and estimate its natural wealth.

Most difficult to understand is the near universal omission of Alaska from serious consideraction by historians, particularly those interested in frontier history. [2] This may be accounted for by Frederick Jackson Turner's *initial view of the frontier.* At the outset of his famous 1893 paper, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History,* he quoted the Superintendent of the Census for 1890. "Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, etc., it can not, therefore, any longer have a place in the census reports." [3] Turner concludes, "This brief official statement marks the closing of a great historic movement." [4] Turner seems to have believed that the end of a *frontier line* meant the end of a *frontier.* [5] And yet, in the business of defining a frontier, he avoided the concept of "evenness". [6] The frontier was neither Hadrian's Wall nor could it be a "European frontier running through dense populations." Indeed, he boldly stated, "The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of free land." [7]

Perhaps the key to the forgotten frontier is the word "west". One frontier scholar writes that "westward movement was of paramount importance from the middle of the eighteenth century to the 1890's when free lands disappeared." [8] A Homestead Act offering "free land" is still in force in the Forty-Ninth State and has been for years. True, the generalizations of the western frontier do not always fit the north. Professor Ray Allen Billington's hero is "the hard-working farmer who, ax in hand, marched ever westward until the boundaries of his nation touched the Pacific." [9] Trappers, mountain-men, and prospectors come out second best. The farmer is not the hero of the northern frontier. Climate has dictated otherwise. Climate led the late Walter Prescott

Webb to reject Alaska as a frontier.[10] Treating such "handicapped" geographic frontiers as vestigial remains, Webb pronounces the last words over the corpse. "If the frontier is gone, we should have the courage to recognize the fact, cease to cry for what we have lost, and devote our energy to finding solutions to the problems that now face a frontierless society."[11] And with that Webb gives the *Great Frontier* a premature burial.

Seventy-two years after Turner's 1893 address, an Alaskan scholar checked the same census report which seemed to terminate frontier America. His discovery makes Turner's earlier generalizations less assured. For the Superintendent of the Eleventh Census also observed, "This remote portion of our territory [Alaska] presents difficulties in the way of enumeration scarcely conceivable in the older portion of the country. On an estimated area greater than that of all the states north of Tennessee and east of the Mississippi there is a population less than in most single countries of the populous east."[12] And Morgan Sherwood wrote, "The American frontier had not, of course, vanished; the coast line of all Alaska was still a frontier."[13]

ALASKA: THE GREAT LAND

Today Alaska's population is approximately 273,000. One hundred years following its purchase from Russia, the population equals that estimated in 1700 for the Atlantic frontier after a century of settlement. As the Superintendent of the Eleventh Census observed, these people live in a region of 586,400 square miles, an area one-fifth the size of the contiguous forty-eight states. Ninety-nine percent of the land is still public domain, a legacy in which every American shares. Alaska's natural wealth is diverse encompassing a variety of precious minerals, metals, oil, coal, timber, and furs. Her lakes and streams teem with high-grade fish while off-shore marine life includes, halibut, squid, octopus, porpoise, shrimp, and clams. The world's finest salmon and king crab are to be found here. Whales abound in Alaskan waters.

As in other land west of the hundredth meridian, America's far northern frontier possesses grandeur of incomparable magnitude. In a hundred-mile stretch of highway from Cook Inlet to Seward is scenery reminiscent of Norway's fiords, and the Austrian and Swiss alps. At Sitka, snowcapped Mt. Edgecumbe rivals Fujiyama. Monarch of the Alaska Range, Grand McKinley is North America's Everest. Surely spectacular beauty is to be counted a natural resource of untold worth.

The global population explosion brings a new meaning to the space race. "Lebensraum" may only have been an excuse for Adolf

Hitler's invasion of Eastern Europe but by the year 2000 the U.S. population will probably reach three hundred forty-four million.[14] In the next thirty years, the world population will more than double, reaching a figure of 7.4 billion.[15] Living space will be an increasingly expensive and precious commodity. The millions spent on outer space will for a time seem as nothing compared to that which will be appropriated for inner space. Inner space, yet available in colder, warmer, wetter, and dryer climes is also a natural resource offered by the world's frontiers. Wherever available, sparse settlement will prove increasingly attractive as did older frontiers in comparable situations. The limitation of any area, especially Alaska's colder weather and the lack of cultivable land available at lower latitudes, is traded for the luxury of spaciousness.

It is ironic that Turner, Webb, and many of the Frontier School of American historians could use climate and agriculture as the *sine qua non* of a frontier experience. Exceptions were found in the continental territories. Mining frontiers have seldom been hospitable to farming.[16] Yet many great American cities are located in mountainous areas, desert, or dry plains. Mormons chose a difficult salt-ridden area to irrigate. True, they would turn the arid land into an oasis for agriculture. The point is that the area chosen was a stubborn one. Prehistorians and anthropologists note that such was often true with primitive societies and civilizations. In his *Origin of Civilized Societies,* Rushton Coulborn declares that civilized man has frequently settled in unfriendly and difficult environments.[17] It is puzzling that historians who have written of the individualism of frontiersmen and frontiers overlook the truth that in any age, different pioneers make different concessions for different goals, and that new ages bring new conditions and compromises. But *geographic frontiers still exist on the planet Earth in the closing decades of the twentieth century. And their history will also have meaning for the history of the frontier.*

Above the west staircase to the Visitor's Gallery of the House of Representatives is a large mural painted by Emanuel Leutze in 1862. Entitled "Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way", its foreground depicts pioneers struggling across a rugged divide while in the expansive background mountains with snow open to vast plains and gilded skies. Beneath the mural the artist placed these words.

> The Spirit grows with its allotted spaces.
> The Mind is narrow in narrow spheres.

Emanuel Leutze painted the famous "Purchase of Alaska" several years later. It was presented to William Seward for his service to the State Department.[18] That such an artist, whose work on territorial expansion graced the Capitol, was commissioned to record the Purchase, suggests that the terms "Alaska" and "frontier" were not unrelated.

ALASKA: GATEWAY TO THE PAST

Alaska's past makes the North Pacific archipelago of prime importance in the history of man. As the prehistoric gateway from Asia to America it is both the *first frontier* in the New World and a *last frontier*. It has the unique distinction of being an *eastern frontier* and a *western frontier*. It is both the *oldest frontier* and the *newest frontier* of this continent. That it's *prehistory* and *history* deserve serious research and writing is manifest.

Our preoccupation with the coming of Western civilization to this hemisphere is not an unmixed blessing. The Atlantic frontier is known to every schoolboy. At Jamestown John Donne's words (from his 1622 sermon to members of the London Company) are preserved in stone:

> You have made this Iland, which is but the suburb
> of the Old World a bridge and gallery to the New.

But what of *prehistory's* bridges? Anthropologists generally agree that man first entered the New World from the east. And although there have been several eastern approaches suggested, the Bering Platform offers the best argument. Digging and research in recent years seem to confirm the hypothesis.

If Alaska forms the New World anchor of the Bering Platform, then it follows that the study of its prehistory and ethnology assumes new significance since it is an older bridge than the Atlantic, reaching beyond centuries into millennia. The research of the prehistorian and historian converges at the point where man leaves his primitive state and enters that of civilization. Each specialist asks what traits and development form the prerequisites of civilization. Generalization must be built upon specifics. If tracking the Bering route by physical evidence is partially convincing, perhaps a study of the migration of ideas (as traced through aboriginal legend) may yield light. However important prehistoric bridges might be, it is the traveler and his baggage that count. Here the physical anthropologist and the ethnographer join talents in the reconstruction of the train of ideas, inventions, viewpoints, and values which the New World has inherited from the Old. It may

be at this passageway that the concepts of an "Asian mind", "European mind", and "American mind" can be examined in transition, mutation, or metamorphosis. For many can claim participation in the ages of the Great Land. Eskimo, Aleut, Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Spaniard, Russian, Canadian, Englishman, American (travelling aboard New England whalers, Seattle freighters or overland), Scandinavian, and Japanese – have made Alaska a multi-ethnic, international corridor – a key to the past and most certainly an aid in the future.

ALASKA: MULTI-FRONTIER IN THE DYNAMIC PRESENT

One can only speculate why it took Frederick Jackson Turner a quarter of a century to acknowledge an *expanded view of the frontier* on the North American continent. Addressing the University of Washington's Class of 1914 in the very summer which would also witness the commencement of the First World War, the graying scholar prophesied change in our domestic and foreign relations. He saw great change, too, on the nation's periphery.

> If we turn to the Northern border, where we are about to celebrate a century of peace with England, we see in progress, like a belated procession of our own history the spread of pioneers, the opening of new wildernesses, the building of new cities, the growth of a new and mighty nation. That old American advance of the wheat farmer from the Connecticut to the Mohawk, and the Genesee, from the Great Valley of the Pennsylvania to the Ohio Valley and the prairies of the Middle West, is now by its own momentum and under the stimulus of Canadian homesteads and the high price of wheat, carried across the national border to the once lone plains where the Hudson['s] Bay dog trains crossed the desolate snows of the wild North Land. In the Pacific Northwest the era of construction has not ended, but it is so rapidly in progress that we can already see the closing of the age of the pioneer. [19]

Then he described a long omitted possession.

AMERICA'S FAR NORTHERN FRONTIER

> Already Alaska beckons on the north, and pointing to her wealth of natural resources asks the nation on what new terms the new age will deal with her. [20]

When Turner spoke these words Alaska's population was about 65,000. The territory had reached the older level required for an enabling act but such would not be realized for another 45 years. Gradually the United States became aware of Alaska's importance as a great storehouse of natural wealth and a strategic military position. Today its treasures and location increase its value. Here, living space is still available for those strong enough to seek it. On this as older frontiers, the individual counts for much and the tasks always exceed the available pioneers. To the industries of fishing, furs, timber, mining, transport, tourism, water power, and wildlife, has been added petroleum extraction. All of these make Alaska especially attractive to Americans and also another community of which Turner saw Alaska a member.

The Pacific Frontier

> Across the Pacific looms Asia, no longer a remote vision and a symbol of the unchanging, but borne as by mirage close to our shores and raising grave questions of the common destiny of the people of the ocean. The dreams of Benton and of Seward of a regenerated Orient, when the long march of westward civilization should complete its circle, seem almost to be in process of realization. The age of the Pacific Ocean begins, mysterious and unfathomable in its meaning for our own future.[21]

Alaska reaches far across the Pacific Basin to Asia and with Hawaii and our other possessions makes the United States a partner in the political and economic life of this great maritime community. While Guam, Midway, and Hawaii commit us to the South and Central Pacific, Alaska fixes our interest in the North Pacific. Here, on the seagirt frontier at the old gateway to the New World, is to be found the new gateway to the Old World. Kipling is mocked. *East is West.*

Perhaps it is just this Pacific Frontier which now offers the best opportunity for man to achieve "the balance of ideology".[22] Here Orient and Occident face common problems. Each is borne close to the shores of each. Here each *might* bring that force of reason, scientific temper, faith, and new concern for unity which Barbara Ward would have us implement. "Hitherto, distances have held men apart. Scarcity has driven them to competition and enmity . . . . But now the distances are abolished. It is at least possible that our new technological resources, properly deployed, will conquer ancient short-

age. Can we not at such a time realize the moral unity of our human experience and make it the basis of a patriotism for the world itself?"[23]

Today Japanese capital is invested in Alaskan industry. The University of Alaska's Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research is particularly interested in Japanese-Alaskan economics. Alaska Methodist University has inaugurated a North Pacific Studies program with Nagoya Gakuin University which provides for the exchange of faculty and students between Nipon's industrial center and the Great Land's largest city. Representatives of Alaska's business and governmental agencies often visit Japan on trade missions. Japanese businessmen are a familiar sight in Alaskan cities. Here, indeed, East *is* West.

THE ARCTIC FRONTIER

> We have not come to the northward limit of commercial progress. There was many a pause but no stop to the westward course of empire until we came to the place where East is West. In that sense only is there a northward limit to progress. Corner lots in Rome were precious when the banks of the Thames had no value; the products of Canada were little beyond furs and fish when the British and French agreed in preferring Guadeloupe. But values have shifted north since then and times have changed. Times will continue to change. There is no northern boundary beyond which productive enterprise cannot go till North meets North on the opposite shores of the Arctic Ocean as East has met West on the Pacific.[24]

Written in 1922, these words encompass the magnificent literary and scientific career of America's best known Arctic explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson. One of twenty-four books and 400 manuscripts which record eighty-three years of discovery, *The Northward Course of Empire,* argues that the "path of supremacy" among civilizations, from Upper Egypt in the 54th century BC to the present, reveals in fact a northerly course. Its frontispiece bears a graphic illustration of this climatic and geographic path. Time and mean annual temperature coordinates are traversed by a sinuous line of civilization which does trace a northerly direction. It is interesting that Stefansson's "path of supremacy" (drawn in 1920) is poised before Berlin, Boston, Chicago, Copenhagen, Toronto, Montreal, Riga, Stockholm, Quebec, Moscow, Petrograd, and Winnipeg!

Stefansson's exploration and scientific work in sub-polar and polar regions was not in vain. Today Canadian and U.S. scholars working under the auspices of the Arctic Institute of North America have enlarged man's knowledge of the Basin. This institute is for high latitudes what Richard Haklyt was to newly discovered lands of the Elizabethan age. Michael Marsden (Sir George Williams University, Montreal) sums the ignorance of many when he writes, "It is difficult to impress upon the public and industry at large that the most essential quality of the Arctic is not cold, or gold, or polar bears, but a central position in the world community." [25] And John E. Sater (University of Alaska) expands upon the frontier's economic and geopolitical importance.

> . . . In ancient times the known world centered around the Mediterranean Sea; today the most highly developed cultures encircle the Arctic Basin. Almost eighty per cent of the population of the earth inhabits the northern hemisphere between approximately the thirtieth and sixtieth parallels. Routes over the Arctic Basin have become increasingly important channels for air transportation, since aircraft, unlike surface vehicles, are free to traverse the shortest routes between two points. The airlanes for destructive forces in time of war may also cross the Arctic Basin in the future, and the territories fringing the Arctic Ocean serve today as bases for networks of advance warning installations essential in the military control of the strategic areas that guard the "roof entrances" to both the North American and Eurasian continents. These factors emphasize the need for greater knowledge of the Arctic as a field of operations. [26]

Like the Pacific Basin, the Arctic Rim contains a community of nations — Canada, the United States (Alaska), the Soviet Union, Denmark (Greenland), Iceland, and Norway — whose possession of Arctic territory make necessary the solution of common geographic, political, and economic problems.

Alaska bridges the two northern giants, Canada and Russia. In this position on the Arctic Frontier she already has become a new crossroads of the world in the jet age. A dozen airlines — Asian, European, and American — serve the world through Alaskan cities. Generally Canadian-Alaskan relations have been cordial and cooperation most gratifying. Construction and development in the Soviet Far East is moving forward on a grand scale. Alaska, as the U.S. Arctic frontier, may provide an opportunity for meaningful regional relationships with the Soviet

Union as it has with Canada and Japan. It is through such local interaction and progress that ideological isolation is breached. Louis XIV's dictim that "Nations touch only at their tops," receives an ironic twist in the frequent international encounter on all levels at the world's roof.

THE FUTURE OF ALASKAN HISTORY

> For America, from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, the frontier was the focus of abundance, physically because the land was virgin and culturally because the Anglo-Americans of that time were particularly apt at exploiting the new country. At this lowest threshold of access to abundance, the pioneers found an individualism and a nationalism which they might not have found at other thresholds. But though physically the frontier remained the site of virgin land, cultural changes gave to the people an aptitude for exploiting new industrial potentialities and thus drew the focus of abundance away from the frontier. But this change of focus itself perpetuated and reinforced the habits of fluidity, of mobility, of change, of the expectation of progress, which have been regarded as distinctive frontier traits.[27]

PROBLEMS AND PROMISE

A Stanford historian, Professor David Potter has studied the relationship between economic abundance and the American character. In the above passage quoted from his *People of Plenty*, cultural change and a pragmatic approach are seen as characteristic of the frontier experience. Turner also described the results. "Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. As successive terminal moraines result from successive glaciations, so each frontier leaves its traces behind it, and when it becomes a settled area the region still partakes of the frontier characteristic."[28] Such argument links frontier experience with its aftermath. It is strange, indeed, that scholars of the frontier have been so quick to pronounce its death when the frontier in North America shifted from a *linear* advance to a *circular* one. For if the *frontier process* is a key to the understanding of the American character and culture and a fountainhead of future success, the presence of geographic frontiers becomes all the more important for the historian to recognize.

When Walter Prescott Webb (as the historian of the *Great Frontier)* dismisses a piece of North American real estate well over twice the size of his native Texas as not meeting his description of a frontier due to its variation from temperate zones, he has overlooked or dismissed Turner's observation: *"The stubborn American environment is there with its imperious summons to accept its conditions; . . ."* [my italics] And it is the balance of this statement which makes the settlement of the twentieth century's *circular frontiers* so important to our future, ". . . the inherited ways of doing things are also there; and yet, *in spite of environment,* and *in spite of custom* [my italics], each frontier did indeed furnish a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past; and freshness, and confidence, and scorn of older society, impatience of its restraints and its ideas, and indifference to its lessons, have accompanied the frontier".[29]

As a multi-frontier of the twentieth century, with interests in the American Union, the Pacific Basin, and the Arctic Community, Alaska's helpfulness in generating a world patriotism will depend upon the *uniqueness of her frontier process.* To what extent will she use imagination to discover new paths to solutions of the problems which plagued other frontiers: remoteness, roadlessness, high freight rates, the sensible utilization and development of natural resources, the distribution and settlement of the land, air and water pollution, and most difficult, lifting the indigenous population from the Stone Age to the twentieth century? For it is Alaska's native peoples, so rich in heritage and so poor in the material wealth of modern society, who present what could be an Achilles heel. They must be workers not wards. As before, they must actively participate in Alaska's history. Destitution is to be found in the villages and twentieth century frontiersmen are aware that poverty is not simply an economic condition but also a state of mind. Native claims in Alaska must be settled with much more care and imagination than in other states. The solution must be equitable not only to the natives but to their fellow non-native citizens. For justice can work injustice and every citizen, native and non-native, can wonder if there is a statute of limitations which favors some and impoverishes others. Surely at some point in time the ancestors of every member of the human race have been alienated from their "rightful share" of global real estate.

Imagination is needed to overcome the misconception that Alaska can be settled as a farmer's frontier of the twentieth century. Although a homestead act was passed for Alaska it is quite obsolete except as a legal means for misappropriation of public domain. Homesteads of 160 acres are given under the guise of creating an agrarian economy when the

climate disallows agriculture in any proportion which would be helpful to the economy of the frontier. The great bulk of meat and vegetables is still shipped into Alaska and will be for many years. If the farmer is not to be the hero of this frontier, then Alaska must seek another.

The hero of the multi-frontier which is Alaska will be as much a pioneer and an individualist as his forbears, but will not conquer the Great Land on the same terms or by the same means. Hard work and initiative will be required but Alaska will yield her resources in the future only with the imagination of a new kind of pioneer following new paths. The nature of Alaska will necessitate the cooperation of institutionalized America and technological America. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century our intelligence of Alaska was collected by waves of pioneers familiar to the western movement: the Indian, trapper, trader, company manager, prospector, homesteader, whaler, fisherman, sailor, soldier, and scientist. Today the majority of Alaskans are part of corporate America and the *frontier process* which they are using is also *corporate*. [30] The process will require all the genius of Henry Clay's "American System" and more!

WRITING ALASKAN HISTORY

> In an age which no longer waits patiently through this life for the rewards of the next, it is a crushing spiritual blow to lose one's sense of participation in mankind's journey, and to see only a huge milling-around, a collective living-out of lives with no larger purpose than the days which each accumulates. When we estrange ourselves from history we do not enlarge, we diminish ourselves, even as individuals . . . If we are to meet, endure, and transcend the trials and defeats of the future — for trials and defeats there are certain to be — it can only be from the point of view which, seeing the future as part of the sweep of history, enables us to establish our place in the immense procession in which is incorporated whatever hope humankind may have. [31]

With these thoughts Professor Robert L. Heilbroner concludes his famous study of *The Future as History*. His exhortation should be heeded by every Alaskan as a *corporate pioneer* in this dynamic multi-frontier. But for the historian or future historian of Alaska, Heilbroner's words carry a double charge — not only to *participate* in the Great Land's history, but to *write* it.

Today good prehistories, histories, monographs, biographies, and surveys on the Alaskan past and present are scarce. Before masterful analyses, helpful generalizations, and syntheses can be attempted, more responsible writing is needed. Before the contribution of any people, age, institution, or movement can be appreciated, those *on location* must record and communicate their discovery. The best writing makes use of both stone and rainbow—the paper trail (documentation) and intuitive truth (imagination). The goal of the historian is to tell a *true story* insofar as his material, understanding, and vision allow. And while one must keep *proportion, balance,* and *detachment* before him—acknowledging the warnings of Plutarch, Becker, and Beard—there is really no substitute for the *insight* which the *participating historian* may provide. [32] In *Vistas of History,* Samuel Eliot Morison uses this concept. He chose Francis Parkman as his inspiration because the colorful historian of New France was first an outdoorsman who visited every scene of the action he described. "His histories not only are so well documented that seldom can any critic find his facts at fault; they also breathe the aroma of the forest and wilderness trail, they re-create the atmosphere in which his characters live and move, so that the reader has a sense of participation in the drama of a great nation conquering the wilderness." [33] In his own life as an historian-of-action, Morison learned the importance of oral testimony and visual observation—that frequently documents are overstressed and are not themselves facts, but symbols of facts—"for a participating historian, it often became clear that things did not run as smoothly as they appeared in the official document . . ." [34] In his introduction to *Breaking New Ground* (which every historian should read), Gifford Pinchot warns that unless an eyewitness sets forth the circumstances of the times, the condition of public opinion, a true picture is hard to get. "And for drawing that picture personal experience beats documentary history all hollow." [35] "The common statement that actions or events cannot be properly appraised until after generations have passed has always seemed to me pure nonsense. If it means anything, it means that actions and events cannot be understood until there is nobody left alive who knows the inside causes which produced them, or the true conditions which gave them their meaning." [36]

Our communication and transportation revolution, rapid rate of social transition, and the population explosion, make the writing of contemporary history both difficult and timely. Insights must be shared that solutions to pressing current problems be quickly reached. Like earlier frontiers of this planet, Alaska is not an *armchair wilderness.* Her history cannot easily be written without first-hand appreciation of her *geographic character and personality.*

Happily, the Purchase Centennial is a milepost on the highroad of Alaskan historical writing. The university presses of Washington, Yale, Alaska, Oxford, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Alaska Methodist have joined World, Knopf, Holt-Rinehart-Winston, Doubleday, and Little, Brown in an unprecedented pageant of publication upon Alaskan history. AMU's *Alaska Review* published centennial issues with articles of consequence. The centennial year witnessed the founding of a new Alaska State Historical Society. The publication, *Alaska Northern Lights Quarterly* launched in 1966, has become an important Alaskan periodical. During the year papers were read in panels on Alaskan history at the annual professional meetings of the Western History Association (San Francisco), the Pacific Coast Branch of the AHA (Stanford University), and the American Historical Association (Toronto, Canada). The first Conference on Alaskan History (June 8-10, 1967) was held on the campus of Alaska Methodist University under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Historical Association. This publication constitutes the proceedings of that conference.

Other milestones beckon. On the way we must encourage those into whose custody is entrusted the stuff of history (family papers, records, diaries, manuscripts, journals, letters, etc.) to place such collections in archives (Alaska Methodist University, Anchorage; the University of Alaska, Fairbanks; Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka; and the State Historical Library, Juneau) for safekeeping against the day they will be needed. As we journey we must note the fallacies which have been chronicled and by correcting the misconceptions, close one path toward error and open the road to truth. Where reinterpretations are justified we must supply them. When we discover caches of Alaskana, we ought to work the claims or disclose them. [37] When possible we should suggest new directions research and writing should take for the timely development of our multi-frontier as it seeks to continue its dynamic role in the American Union, the Pacific Basin, the Arctic Community, and the World-at-Large. Much of the journey will present the difficult task of negotiating unfamiliar ground as "hills peep o'er hills and alps on alps arise." As the Queen's Scholar of Westminster — examining the uncharted — we must employ experience and intuition, stone and rainbow, fact and imagination to discover "New Room for the Race." And if our civilization is not at meridian but only "first light" — the cock-crowing and the morning star — then it is the best part of the day to continue the climb.

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17 Rushton Coulborn, The Origin of Civilized Societies (Princeton, 1959), 13-14.

18 Glyndon G. Van Deusen, William Henry Seward (New York, 1967), 544.
Emanuel Leutze (1816-1868) was born in Gmund, Wurttemberg, but soon after his family emigrated to Fredericksburg, Va., because of political oppression in Germany. When the family moved to Philadelphia, Emanuel gained the patronage and encouragement of Edward L. Carey. He proceeded to Dusseldorf in 1841 and became a pupil of Karl Friedrich Lessing. His first historical painting "Columbus Before the Council of Salamanca" was so well received that it was purchased by the Art Union of Dusseldorf. In 1859, Leutze returned to the United States where he continued a long

series of large historical compositions among which are: "Washington Crossing the Delaware," "The Landing of the Norsemen," "The Settlement of Maryland," "Washington at Monmouth," "The Storming of Teocalli, Mexico," and "Cromwell and Milton." Among his many portraits are Lincoln, Grant, Burnside, Seward (Purchase), and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The "Purchase of Alaska" was completed in the last year of his life.

19 Frederick Jackson Turner, Op. Cit., 296.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 296-297

22 Barbara Ward, Spaceship Earth (New York, 1966), 107-148.

23 Ibid., 148.

24 Vilhjalmur Stefansson, The Northward Course of Empire (New York, 1924), 19.

25 R. St. J. Macdonald, editor, The Arctic Frontier (Toronto, 1966), forward, i.

26 John E. Sater, coordinator, The Arctic Basin (Centreville, Maryland, 1963), preface, ii.

27 David M. Potter, People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character (Chicago, 1954), 164-165.

28 Frederick Jackson Turner, Op. cit., 4.

29 Ibid., 38.

30 Many of the ideas and phrases of this paragraph were taken from a provocative paper submitted to my Freshman Seminar in History (an alternative for Fundamentals of English Composition offered to AMU freshmen) by Kathleen Milner. The seminar topic was "Alaska and the American Character."

31 Robert L. Heilbroner, The Future as History (New York, 1959), 209.

32 In his biographical sketch of Pericles, Plutarch writes: "So it is difficult to come at the truth in the walk of history since, if the writers live after the events they relate, they can be but imperfectly informed of facts, and if they describe the persons and transactions of their own times, they are tempted by envy and hatred or by interest and friendship to vitiate and pervert the truth." See Eduard C. Lindeman, ed., Life Stories of Men Who Shaped History from Plutarch's Lives (New York, 1950), 75. See also Cushing Strout, The Pragmatic Revolt in American History: Carl Becker and Charles Beard (Ithaca, 1966).

33 Samuel Eliot Morison, Vistas of History (New York, 1964), 25, 26.

34 Ibid., 33, 34.

35 Gifford Pinchot, Breaking New Ground (New York, 1947), xv.

36 Ibid., xvii.

37 See Robert A. Frederick, "Caches of Alaskana: Library and Archival Sources of Alaskan History" in the Alaska Review, (Alaska Methodist University, Anchorage) II-3, fall and winter 1966-1967, 39-79. For one full year, January to December, 1965, the holdings of three hundred institutions were surveyed. Included were university libraries, public libraries, research libraries, state and federal archives, city and state historical society libraries, and the libraries of state and federal agencies. The sources reported include books, pamphlets, printed documents, manuscripts, newspapers, transcriptions, pictorial collections, photographs, and maps.

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